Ristretto

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Ristretto

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Teacher Will starts over in the high school in the small town of Wolf Trap. Hannibal owns the local independent coffee shop. The inevitable happens.

Notes

the stalking and destruction and violence is not carried out by either Will or Hannibal but by a third person who enters the scene... dun dun duuuuuuuuh

Chapter 1

Will wasn't surprised that there was only one coffee shop on the small town's high street.

He had grown up in a place like this. Well, several places like this as his dad had moved from job to job over small town Louisiana. It was one of the reasons that he'd moved away to the city as soon as he'd been old enough. Wanting to experience that life, a more anonymous life.

And now he was back in a small town. Not because he missed small town life, even though he had to admit to missing the outdoors. In the city it had been great, he'd been a nobody rather than the new kid over and over. He'd lived in the same building the last five years whilst he'd been teaching at the local school, and yet only knew the name of one neighbour.

That had been nice. But after a while it hadn't made up for all the things he was missing out on now that his life had settled and he was his own person making his own way.

He had always wanted a dog. Never been able to have one as a kid whilst they were constantly moving, and he certainly couldn't have one in his crappy city apartment. He missed fishing. Missed

sailing. Things that weren't easy or cheap in the city. And money went much further outside of the city.

And so when this job had come up in the small town of Wolf Trap, Will had decided to take a punt. He wasn't even sure he'd get it, and when he did, only then did the concerns set in.

Yes, he'd be able to fish and get a dog. In fact he'd rented a property near the edge of town and almost into the woods. His wages definitely went further in that respect.

But it also meant that he'd lose his anonymity.

Will remembered very well what it had been like to live in small towns. And not just that, he remembered too well what it had been like to always be the new kid in those towns. The weird loner kid.

Will tried not to think about it. He'd keep to himself on the edge of town, and hey, maybe this place wouldn't be so backwards? Maybe he wouldn't get the shit beat out of him when they suspected he was gay?

Taking in a deep breath, Will stepped towards the coffee shop. It was his first teaching day and he had just soured his own mood. The least he could do was inject some caffeine into his system.

Will winced as the overdoor bell rang to signal his entrance.

He really wasn't a fan of those, there always felt something more intrusive about them than helpful. Seemed an odd way to alert the staff to new customers. In fact none of the three staff even turned to look at the door as Will glanced up at the bell and then at them.

A quick look around the room told him that no one else had either, he was thankful for that at least. Everyone was already deaf to the thing. He'd had quite enough of people staring at him since he'd moved to town a couple of weeks earlier.

Will remembered the small towns from childhood - people knew each other's name and business. It had been thirteen days and he already missed the anonymity of the city. No neighbours dropping by with pie and houseplants to introduce themselves. No friendly enquiries of 'say, aren't you the new teacher over at the high school?' when he was just trying to buy groceries.

Finding the coffee shop had, he hoped, been a godsend. He missed real coffee, and his nespresso machine barely cut it. From the outside, the shop had the reassuring familiarity of a big city coffee shop, and Will could do with that before starting classes.

The coffee shop had also appeared small from the outside, until he entered and clocked the stairs at the back. There was an upper level, but even so this frontspace was one-third a counter.

It was, for want of a better term, twee. Rather than the all modern chain expectation that the exterior had given, it was instead exactly what Will had expected from this little cookie cutter town, sadly. The fussy décor, the little cakes, the music that was playing - it felt like a microcosm of the little town and Will had to remind himself he had moved here for a reason.

The one relief as he walked in, was the smell of fresh grounds.

Perhaps it had been having to resort to living on his own small coffee machine for over a week, but in that moment Will was sure it was the best coffee he'd ever smelled. He was looking forward to trying a strong, rich cup of coffee.

There were two people ahead of him in the small queue that he joined, and behind the bar, two servers and one person making the actual coffees. Two younger girls, community college students perhaps, and an older guy. Well, maybe a little older than Will, so not all that old?

They all wore black, the girls in t-shirts with logo'd pinny over the top, but the man wore a black shirt with a deep red tie. Or at least it seemed at first glance. As he turned under the shop lights, Will could see the faintest paisley pattern, in such a subtly different shade that it was almost not there at all.

Will didn't realise he'd become lost in gazing at the pattern dancing across the material, until the customer that had joined behind him, politely cleared their throat.

Both the customer and the man behind the counter were looking at him expectantly. In fact the man behind the counter had a curve to the corner of his mouth that made him look a little amused by Will's daydreaming.

He grit his teeth and stepped forward.

"Espresso, a double. To go." Will reeled off a lifetime's practiced order.

That, it seemed, earned him a smile.

"Seems our new resident likes a strong coffee." The man replied in a smooth foreign accent that Will felt right down to his bones.

He wasn't one to get flustered, but the man was attractive and his gaze was so soft and yet piercing.

"Might I suggest instead, a ristretto?" The man crooned.

"A what? I just want a strong coffee." Will replied quickly, trying not to let the heat rise in his cheeks and hating every moment of it. He didn't like being flustered. His dad had been hard on him for wearing his heart on his sleeve, and over the years Will found himself tampering down any outward emotion that wasn't negative.

It took a lot to make him smile, but very little to make him angry or rude. And he hated small talk and the attention it drew, like now.

Despite his abrupt response the man continued to smile, "It's a short shot, more highly concentrated than espresso, using less water for the same amount of grounds." As the man talked he picked up something from behind the counter and slid it across to Will. It was a chart showing the different amounts of shots, water and cream to make each type of coffee. Will had seen similar ones before but never including a ristretto that he could recall, to which the man now pointed. "Perhaps you'd like to try a double ristretto?"

"Um, sure, yeah." Will replied as he slid the card back, impatient to be done.

He had anticipated there might be some conversation, not least because he was new in town, but he had hoped the experience would be much like in the city. In, order, go. No such luck.

Will's eyes tracked the card as the man pulled it back and slotted it by the till point.

And there Will's eyes caught the Pride flag. It sat next to a small collection tin for Lambda Legal.

Will drew in a sharp breath at the unexpectedness of it and then looked up at the man, who must have followed his gaze and simply smiled again, soft. And Will knew that smile. It could have been the cautious and defensive smile of someone worried they were about to get judged, or possibly even assaulted. But no, it wasn't. It was the gentle smile of someone who was looking right through him and knew he was gay.

Will swallowed, his jaw clenching.

He had no intention of being *out* in this town until there ever came a point where he was sure it wouldn't damage his career at the high school or result in slashed car tires or people leaving bags of flaming shit on his doorstep. He certainly hadn't planned to disclose that information to a damn barista.

So Will took a step back, righted himself and frowned before asking coldly, "How much do I owe you?"

The man must have sensed the change as he drew back too and busied himself, not looking at Will even as he spoke. Giving him the space he needed.

"Let's make this one on the house. A small welcome to the town. And after all, you may hate it."

Normally Will would refuse, but in an attempt to end this whole interaction and get the damn hell out of the place, Will nodded and then replied.

"Okay, thanks. That's nice of you. Can I get it to go?" He repeated the last just to ensure he wasn't going to have to extend his visit here any longer than necessary.

"Of course," The man politely replied. "Collect at the end of the counter."

Finally released from this exchange, Will did as he was told and moved to the end of the counter, taking out his phone to check over emails he had already read and nothing else in particular, in order to avoid any further interactions.

A minute later he heard a perky voice say, "Hey. Got your order."

He looked up and one of the young women was placing two small takeaway cups on the collection counter. "Ristretto," she said, tapping the first cup, and then "water," tapping the second. "Have a nice day." She beamed and then went back to her station.

Will pocketed his phone and quickly grabbed both cups and headed towards the door. Luckily someone was coming through and they held it for him and he grunted his thanks before hurtling out into the fresh air.

Will walked quickly to the end of the street and to the town square. He crossed to it and then took a seat on one of the benches around the manicured lawn. He set down the cups next to him and let out a breath.

The last thing he'd expected on his first day on the job was to ping someone's gaydar.

Trying to calm himself, Will took a few deep breaths, relaxed on the bench and then picked up his coffee.

When he removed the lid to let it cool a little, the scent plumed up around him and it was divine. He could barely wait until it was cool enough to take a sip before he did so and savoured it.

Will let out an involuntary groan.

It was the best coffee he'd ever tasted.

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The morning rush petered out as the businesses all went to work, leaving Hannibal, Mischa and Abigail to start preparing the few take away orders they delivered mid morning to some of the small local businesses.

As Mischa pulled on her jacket and went around to the collection counter to start packing the coffees into trays, she grinned up at Hannibal.

"So, the new high school teacher is cute."

Hannibal huffed and looked over at her, giving her a cold stare which only made her giggle.

Abigail's response to which was to join in. He sighed at them both.

When he'd moved his little sister here he had wondered if it had been a mistake. He had gone from owning his own successful therapy practice in the city to setting up a coffee shop in a small town. Not an expected move perhaps, but coffee had always been a passion of his and money wasn't wanting thanks to the inheritance from their parents.

He had just grown to realise as the years passed, that he spent very little time with his sister. And as her only family, he owed it to her. More than that, he wanted to experience those years with her he'd never get back. He remembered their own parents back in Lithuania working all hours to make the money they did at the expense of a relationship with him. And he never wanted her to have that, especially now that he was her guardian.

When their parents had died in a car crash she had still been so young. And he had taken her with him all over the world. School in Paris, then to John Hopkins in Baltimore where he eventually settled. She'd always had a nanny of course, but every day he'd come home and there would be a new story and she'd be slightly taller. In the end it had been an easy decision to give it all up and focus on her and their relationship.

And now she was at the local community college. The highest education the town offered.

He'd had big dreams of her going to university, and she still might transfer. But she had followed her heart and stayed because Abigail had stayed. They had been inseparable almost as soon as they'd met and their budding romance had not been the surprise Mischa had clearly expected when she had told Hannibal she wasn't going to go to university and didn't plan to leave Wolf Trap.

They had compromised and so she'd started at the college with Abigail and they would see what the future would hold.

Despite his ambitions for her, how could he scald her over planning her life around love when he had done the same? Whatever happened between her and Abigail, university was still there, still an option. But for now Abigail, and Hannibal, got to keep her a little longer.

“Shouldn’t you both be on your way to class?” Hannibal growled, which only made them chuckle all the harder as they headed for the door. “Mischa, see you at four.” He followed with, to which he received a wave as they left.

When the shop was quiet, but for a couple of customers upstairs and the soft music, Hannibal let out a sigh and adjusted the little pride flag next to the till.

He hadn’t missed that look.

This wasn’t the most progressive of places but he and Mischa had never encountered anything more than a snarl from a customer spotting the flag. And it was never a loss when people like that never returned for a repeat visit.

But this wasn’t that look.

The new teacher’s eyes had widened with something like fear and anxiety. As though terrified someone would spot him for what he was. Most, Hannibal was sure, wouldn’t. And whilst Hannibal detested the phrase *gaydar*, he knew first hand those little looks of recognition when a queer person spotted another queer person, whatever the reaction beyond that.

And the new teacher’s reaction? That spoke of a man who did not want others to know his proclivities.

Hannibal was certainly not going to disclose his suspicions to anyone.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Will liked the coffee, he's less sure of how he feels about Hannibal Lecter.

It hadn’t been Will’s intention to avoid the coffee shop after that first day, but he had.

Every day there seemed to be a new reason that he couldn’t possibly go back and get more of the most amazing coffee he’d ever tasted. Of course, that had been easy his first week on the job, as he could tell himself that it was necessary to get in early so he could settle and get used to things before the school day started.

But now, halfway through his second week, could he really keep claiming that?

No. He really couldn’t.

He winced as he drove along the high street and towards the school without stopping for coffee.

There was a small ache within him at the loss. Just that one taste had been enough for him to realise he’d found the coffee of his dreams and now he was denying himself, and for what?

Will pulled up into his parking spot and killed the engine. He sighed, knowing that this was ridiculous, but it was practically instinct.

In the city he’d been out. Or at least he hadn’t hidden that he was gay. The school knew. He went to bars, he had hookups. He had of course been appropriately discreet at the school, but it hadn’t been a secret.

Now? He’d told the headteacher, but otherwise had been lowkey. If he hadn’t worried that it might come back to bite him in the ass he wouldn’t have even told the head. As it was, he didn’t plan on getting especially friendly with anyone, including the teachers, for a while. Depending on how comfortable he began to feel. And even then he might not be open about it all.

Maybe it seemed ridiculous, but after years of being the odd new kid and getting the shit beat out of him in towns just like this, Will was cautious. The bullying hadn’t really been because he was new, that was just the novelty of it. It was because he was precocious and maybe what people would perceive as camp. Something he’d trained himself out of as his survival instincts kicked in. He became quiet, withdrawn even. Studious. So whilst he often was still the subject of bullying as the small, quiet new kid, the less *gay* he appeared the less he got physically assaulted by his peers and sneered at by their parents.

He was a grown man now, not a runty little kid, but those scars ran deep.

Will was lost in the thoughts as he started up the back steps to the school.

“Oh hey! It’s Will Graham, right? We assumed the new guy in town must be the new school teacher.”

At first Will didn’t quite recognise the young woman who was coming down the steps. Seeing the pinny he realised she was one of the staff from the coffee shop and immediately he blushed at the idea they’d been discussing him at all.

She clocked the blush and grinned as he cursed under his breath.

“Just making a delivery for the staff meeting,” She smiled as she explained.

They’ve both come to a stop and he’s not sure what to say, so he simply replies, “Oh, okay.”

“Abigail,” She offers her name and her hand and he shakes it firmly before letting her hand go. She’s still grinning at him as she continues, “They ordered you an Americano with an extra shot. I’m guessing based on your drinking habits at work. But Hannibal, the boss, popped a double ristretto on the order for you too.”

“Oh,” Will’s throat was dry and his cheeks burned all the more.

“Mischa thought you might not have liked it and that’s why you haven’t been back in. But Hannibal insisted he was sure you enjoyed the ristretto, you just perhaps haven’t had the time to come back, what with settling in.” Abigail’s words were leading, as though wanting him to state which, if either, were the case.

Fuck.

“Um, yeah…” Will scrubbed his hand at the back of his neck, feeling on the spot as sweet as she was being and trying to keep track of who everyone was. Abigail, Mischa, Hannibal. “Been busy.”

She narrowed her eyes and pursed her lips, her expression otherwise still friendly. “It was the flag, wasn’t it? I saw the way you looked at it and then at Hannibal. You know that, um…” She looked him over as though unsure how much to say and he was begging her with eyes to say nothing. “It’s a welcoming place. You should know. Um, discreet and friendly. And, um, *discreet*. Y’know?”

Abigail was clearly trying very hard to subtly communicate something to him, and he was getting it. Mostly because she wasn’t in the least being as subtle as she thought.

They knew, or at least suspected, and wouldn’t out him.

He gave a curt nod and she smiled, starting down the steps again. When she got to the bottom she turned and looked back up at him as he reached the door.

“Maybe we’ll see you tomorrow morning,” It wasn’t a question and she all but winked at him.

“Maybe.” He grunted, which made her smile all the more.

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There was something about the coffee shop owner - Hannibal - that made Will nervous.

Not that he didn’t trust him with what he suspected about Will, which was of course true. But because he unnerved Will in a way few had. He wasn’t even sure how to explain it. There was just

something about the man that made him seem more than he appeared to be on the surface. Enough for Will to want to get to know him all the more if he was honest. And maybe some of that was down to the man's cheekbones and warm eyes. And that accent? Even after so little said between them, Will couldn't help but be intrigued as to how such a man could be found in Wolf Trap.

But that wasn't going to happen.

Not right now, not right here. Will wasn't unaware of how guarded he could be at the best of times, but now? He was completely back in the defensive mode he'd existed within between the ages of seven and eighteen.

Will didn't want to admit that it was the potential of talking to Hannibal again that actually was putting him off going back to the shop. But nonetheless, he'd started to observe the shop in the mornings on his way into work and begun to realise that there was a routine in the place. And if he arrived early enough then Hannibal would be preparing the pastries that were to go into the ovens and one or both of the young women would be serving.

With this realisation and safety net it gave, Will's own routine changed. He left the house a little earlier to get to the coffee shop at a time when he was pretty much guaranteed to be served by either Mischa or Abigail. And so that's what he did as the first term ambled on and he found himself always in need of a morning pick me up.

Both women were lovely, and perhaps discovering that they were dating should have set him more at ease, but his past experiences were too deeply ingrained. He had been in too many towns like this to know that there was a whole section of folk happy to excuse young women 'experimenting', but label middle aged gay men as predators.

He tried not to think about it and focus only on the rich aroma of the ristretto as he waited at the pickup counter, watching Abigail and Mischa move around each other as they worked.

"Thanks," He smiled at Mischa as she pushed his drink across the counter.

"Hey, so…" She started, setting her elbows on the counter and leaning over to speak in a low, conspiratorial tone. "He's noticed, y'know. Hannibal? He knows you're trying to avoid him."

Will went to protest, colour rising in his cheeks as Mischa laughed and waved a dismissive hand.

"Abi and I think it's adorable," she added with a smirk.

Will clenched his jaw, and Mischa composed herself a little more.

"And it's okay. He won't say anything or judge you on it. He has this way of intimidating some people, so he's used to it. He's good at understanding people, especially after being a therapist for so long."

"He…" Will started, his mouth dry. "A what?" He clenched his jaw, fighting back memories of the several therapists his dad had sent him to when he was younger, never with any good results. If Mischa noticed his unease, she didn't comment on it but continued all the same.

"He just thinks that he might have offended you a little but doesn't want to make it worse by forcing you to talk to him. Don't sweat it," She smiled sweetly and then all but whispered, "I guess that's what it must be, rather than what Abi and I suspect." She winked at him and walked off.

Will stared at her wide-eyed and speechless. He wanted to reply but he had no idea what to say to any of that.

The whole situation made Will uncomfortable, so he simply picked up his coffee and gave his thanks before leaving.

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Hannibal endured a month of not serving Will Graham.

Endured being teased by Mischa and Abigail for how many times he glanced at the door and how much he scowled when Will came in whilst he was working on the pastries. And he was always gone again before he had a chance to clean up and go make conversation.

They teased him about how sweet, if awkward, the man was and how much they looked forward to making his coffee in the morning. Mischa might be the only one related to him, but he verbally scalded them equally over it, to which they both simply smirked.

Perhaps it was the situation itself that had piqued his interest? Or the fact that there was a chance that Will Graham was one of the few eligible gay men for miles around? But Hannibal was self aware enough as a therapist to know what had him feeling this desire to be acquainted with the man. And that was his rudeness.

Rudeness was something Hannibal detested, and yet, the way Will Graham had been so abrupt during their first encounter had left Hannibal wishing he'd been even more rude. He could probably do a whole study and write several papers on the phenomenon, but more than anything he just didn't want to deny himself something he desired. And what he desired, from that brief but remarkable acquaintance, was to know the teacher better.

So Hannibal had had enough of the distance and of the teasing and started to get up extra early to prep the pastries and then left them on the kitchen counter whilst the ovens were warming up, in the hopes of being available when Will came in. And on the third day of this, he timed it perfectly.

To seem less obvious, Hannibal busied himself behind the counter ahead of time. He didn't want to be caught coming out from the kitchen.

Hannibal looked up as he heard the footfalls to the counter a few moments after the bell rang. Before Hannibal could open his mouth to say anything, Abigail was there next to him.

"Oh hey," Abigail called out from beside him and gave a friendly wave, "How are you doing, Mr Graham?"

Hannibal turned and looked at her and then at Will Graham. His smile to Abigail seemed a little embarrassed but was there nonetheless. "Um, just fine."

She gave another little smile and then went back to topping up the coffee beans, leaving Will and Hannibal standing on opposing sides of the counter.

"Did you enjoy the ristretto?" Hannibal asked, as if weeks hadn't passed since that encounter.

"I did, thank you. It was a good recommendation," Will's cheeks heated a little as he replied, even with the gruffness to his tone. A gruffness that pulled something tight within Hannibal's gut.

“And yet you haven’t returned. Maybe you were displeased by the service?” Hannibal teased as he started to pull out a takeaway cup.

“No. I’ve been, um… I’ve been by. I must have just kept missing you.” Will seemed on the backfoot and Hannibal couldn’t help his smile, wanting to push his tease further but not wanting to scare the man off again.

“Please Mr Graham, don’t be concerned. We never judge any of our customers on their coffee preferences, and certainly don’t inform others of those preferences.” Hannibal busied himself as he said this, not meeting Will’s eye in the hope that he’d be more comfortable.

When Hannibal looked up Will swallowed and gave him a hard look. “Yeah, um, Abigail said.”

Hannibal raised a brow at that and glanced over at the girl, though she was now too busy with the oven to be paying them any attention. “Did she really,” He muttered, expecting no answer.

“Yeah, I’m not sure which of you was less subtle.” The man grumbled, though Hannibal couldn’t quite tell whether he was angry or teasing so decided not to push it further.

Being a purveyor of fine coffee with constant social interaction, and previously a psychiatrist, he liked to consider himself a good judge of character. A good reader of people, and yet this man was elusive. Secretive in a way that made Hannibal all the more intrigued.

“Ristretto?” Hannibal asked with a smile, to which Will Graham nodded. They conducted the rest of the transaction silently and exchanged a polite nod before he moved on to the pick up counter to collect his drink.

Hannibal didn’t miss that Abigail and Mischa seemed to have disappeared into the kitchen, leaving him to make and counter the coffee. And he was very aware of Will Graham watching him the whole time.

“Thanks,” Will mumbled when he picked up his coffee, his tone suggesting he was struggling to be polite.

“My pleasure,” Hannibal smiled his response. “Perhaps I’ll see you tomorrow?” Hannibal hadn’t meant his tone to have the slightly suggestive lilt that it did, but the responding raised brow from Will was worth it.

“Just keep it professional.” Will replied, in a hard tone. And for a moment Hannibal was sure he’d crossed a line, but then Will’s mouth tweaked a little, a very slight grin on his lips as if he couldn’t help the reaction.

“Or we could socialise like adults, god forbid we become friendly.” Hannibal replied smoothly.

Will did crack a smile at that, barely there and gone again as he cleared his throat and replied, “I don’t find you that interesting.”

Hannibal hummed his amusement, “You will.”

For a moment it looked like Will was going to reply, but then the ovens out back beeped to say they were up to temperature and the moment was lost.

Will gave a curt nod before striding from the coffee shop, drink in hand.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Will didn't thinks could get any more awkward, and yet...

Will moaned as Hannibal's hand cupped him through his pants. He was so hard, almost unbearably so, and the gorgeous man whispering dirty things in his ear wasn't helping at all.

"I have to get to work," Will tried to discourage him, though not very insistently. His words echoed around the completely empty coffee shop. No other staff, no patrons. It was still dark outside and the sign was flipped to closed.

"I want you to bend me over the counter and-" Hannibal's words were interrupted by a loud and insistent beeping and they both looked towards the kitchen. One of the ovens?

The noise continued until Will opened his eyes and slammed his hand down on his alarm clock.

Blinking, and attempting to acclimate himself, Will lay back onto the pillows. Panting as he looked up at the dimly lit ceiling. He swallowed, his mouth dry and throat aching. And he was so unbelievably hard it was almost painful.

Will was pretty sure that had he not woken up, he'd have come in his shorts like a teenager.

As it was he was pretty sure the friction of just getting up and walking to the bathroom might do the job too.

He bit his lower lip as flashes of his dream returned to him, Hannibal begging him to fuck him. And fuck, the thought of pushing his cock inside the charming if odd shop owner made Will tremble.

Will swallowed again and made a snap decision. He tugged his sleep shorts down and hooked them under his balls, taking them in hand as he slid his other hand up and down his leaking cock.

Will moaned at the contact, needing the relief and the release.

At first he tried to think about anything other than Hannibal Lecter. Not least because it felt sort of weird and intrusive. Again, jerking off over someone he actually personally knew but wasn't seeing, wasn't something he'd done since he'd been a teenager.

But no matter what or who he tried to think about, his mind kept coming back to Hannibal.

Easing Hannibal's tie off.

Hannibal welcoming him to the shop with a passionate kiss.

Grinding against each other in the shop's customer bathroom.

Hannibal next to him right now in his bed.

His mind supplied an endless array of situations and scenarios before coming back to his actual dream.

Unable to fight it any longer, Will reached over into his bedside drawer and pumped into his palm a little lube he kept there just for such purposes. With a long groan he went back to stroking his cock, faster now and a tighter if wetter grip.

He imagined the squeeze around his cock was Hannibal's ass, as he pictured bending the man over the counter and fucking into him. It was hard and rough, and Hannibal not only took it, but pushed back. Moaning Will's name and begging him to fuck him all the harder.

Will's heart was hammering in his chest, his breathing erratic as the scene played out and he continued to tug at his balls and fist his cock as hard as he ever had.

It was a matter of minutes before Will's breath hitched and his orgasm hit suddenly. His balls drew up and his cock pulsed as he splattered thick, hot come all over his naked chest and belly. He continued to stroke through the climax, milking himself dry as he imagined spilling deep inside of Hannibal.

Will lay there panting and reeling from the experience. If it hadn't already been awkward enough getting coffee from Hannibal Lecter, it sure would be now.

In fact the thought made Will a little nauseous with nervous anxiety. There was no denying that jerking off over Hannibal Lecter was likely a monumentally bad idea.

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Hannibal was prepared for Will Graham's arrival. After managing to time it perfectly yesterday, Hannibal was eager to set a new routine. Especially after the slight flirtation that he was very much hoping he hadn't imagined.

Even so, he was anticipating not doing this every day, not overwhelming the man, but this morning it felt prudent to push that connection.

When Will walked in, Hannibal immediately knew he shouldn't serve him this morning.

Will paused as he entered the shop, looked at Hannibal in an almost stricken way, and seemed for a moment like he might leave. Whether it had been their brief conversation the day before or something else entirely, Will Graham looked as though Hannibal was the last person on the planet that he wanted to converse with.

Hannibal reacted quickly, as he had grown accustomed to during his pre-therapy years as an ER surgeon. He cleared his throat and picked up a plate from under the counter, as though that had been his intent, and said politely, "Good morning Mr Graham, Mischa will be right with you."

He didn't miss Mischa's confused expression as he walked past her and into the kitchen, noting the hesitant footsteps towards the counter.

Hannibal let out a sigh as he placed down the redundant plate and found little jobs to do whilst he was waiting for the ovens to heat.

He couldn't help but feel a little disappointed, even heavy hearted, as he heard Will give his order to Mischa. He sounded stilted, and just as awkward as he had been the first day he'd come to the shop. It seemed instead of hopefully enticing Will Graham from his shell, Hannibal had inadvertently pushed him back in.

After the man left, Mischa joined him in the kitchen. He carried on preparing the pastries but couldn't entirely ignore the pointed look she was giving him. Finally when the ovens were up to temperature, he slid in the trays of pastries and looked at her.

"What was that all about?" She asked, and there was an edge of something to her tone. Not quite anger but certainly frustration. He wasn't at all blind to the fact that she and Abigail were hoping to play matchmaker.

"I fear I may have made him uncomfortable by forcing an interaction yesterday," Hannibal replied with a sigh.

Mischa looked incredulously at him and then frowned, shaking her head. "I don't think that's it. He spent the whole time glancing back out here at you. Like he couldn't decide whether he wanted you to come talk to him or not. And honestly? He seemed kinda disappointed when you didn't."

Hannibal clenched his jaw and shook his head.

"I had hoped to make a new friend, but in fact I may have done the opposite." Hannibal mused.

Mischa rolled her eyes, "You're just so damn dramatic. Maybe he's gay and he knows you are gay, and either he doesn't want it assumed that just because you're both gay you should hang out? Or maybe, he likes the cut of your jib and is so deeply closetted that he's keeping you at arm's length. I can't believe you're the therapist here." She was exasperated with him, which was not anything new.

He nodded, "Yes I suppose you're right."

"And one other thing," She said as she started to walk away, "there's even a chance that it's nothing to do with you and he was just having a shitty morning. Don't build it up in your ridiculously big brain and blow it all out of proportion!" She scalded.

Hannibal drew in a deep breath and released it as a sigh. Of course, as was often the case, Mischa was absolutely correct and once more he had, as she would say, his head up his own ass.

*

Will felt terrible.

It was clear Hannibal had seen something in his expression and decided to avoid him, or give him some space? And that had been days ago. And every morning since Hannibal was back to his old routine and never out in the shop front when Will went in.

On the one hand he appreciated the concern, but on the other it just made him feel like a total asshole. He was making the man feel he should avoid him, all because he had a wet dream about him.

Even so, in some ways it was probably for the best. Will wasn't in a position to act on the attraction he felt. He didn't want to be out right now, if ever in this place, and he didn't feel he had any right to ask someone to sneak around with him so he wasn't exactly in a position to so much as flirt with someone. It would be wrong to lead them on like that.

As much as Will knew the best course was likely to just maintain this distance between them, he couldn't help but feel bad that he might have left Hannibal feeling shit about the whole thing. And that was how he ended up getting up ridiculously early, in time for opening, and heading to the coffee shop the next morning.

It was, as hoped, fairly quiet. No other patrons, just Hannibal behind the counter and Mischa pulling the chairs from the tables and setting them up for the day.

As Will entered, Hannibal looked up and did a double take, and frowned before turning back to his business.

Will cleared his throat and walked to the counter, noticing that Mischa stopped to look at him and immediately he was sure something was amiss.

"Um, can I get a coffee?" Will asked, cautiously.

Before Hannibal had chance to look up, Mischa replied with a light laugh.

"We're not open yet," She told him with a grin, and when Will looked at her she pointed at the door. And yes, there it was clear that the open sign was still facing inwards.

"Shit," Will cursed and Mischa chuckled again.

"It will take a few minutes for the machines to be up and running, but then I can make you a drink. Ristretto?" Hannibal asked politely.

"Yeah, sure." Will mumbled. "Shit. I'm sorry, I didn't realise it was quite as early as that."

"It's quite alright, you are clearly eager for caffeine this morning." Hannibal smiled and Will's mouth went dry.

"No. I mean, yeah. But, I guess I came to apologise," Will said, wincing as he scrubbed his hand over the back of his neck, starting to get flustered.

At that Hannibal stopped what he was doing and actually looked at him with a curious expression.

"There is nothing you need to apologise for," Hannibal started.

"I just feel like I've offended you or something. I can be, um. Abrupt. Some people might call me rude."

That quirked a smile on Hannibal's face that eased Will a little whilst simultaneously made his cheeks heat.

"You've not offended me Mr Graham. If anything I find your abrasive personality somewhat charming." There was a note of flirtation there and Will couldn't help but smile despite himself.

Will schooled his expression and cleared his throat.

“Then I need to clear the air. I just… you seem really…” Will sighed and looked around to see where Mischa was. When he realised she’d gone out to the kitchen he leaned against the counter, a little closer to Hannibal. “I guess I just meant what I said about being professional,” Will winced. “I’d… like to not be professional. But that’s just the way things are right now and I don’t want to mislead, um, anyone.”

“I completely understand,” Hannibal replied with a very polite smile.

“Shit, that’s so presumptuous, I… I mean, if you were interested in not being professional.” Will tried to fumble the words together, his face burning as he grew all the more flustered. “Fuck.”

Hannibal chuckled and shook his head, “It’s quite alright. I understand and no, you aren’t being presumptuous.”

“Fuck,” Will muttered again and shook his head. “I’m sorry. This is so awkward. Maybe I should go-”

“I’ll not hear of it,” Hannibal interjected. “I’ll have your coffee ready in just a moment.” He moved over to the coffee machine which was now making a loud grinding noise.

Hannibal was so damn pleasant that Will hated himself a little. He probably should have just stayed away. In fact, he probably shouldn’t come back. Should just invest in a high quality coffee maker for at home.

Will was lost in these thoughts when Mischa appeared at his side. His face, which had been cooling, burned once more at the thought that she might have overheard any of the conversation with her brother.

“Hey, Mr Graham, can I ask you a question?” She asked innocently.

“Um, I guess-” Will started, but she was ready to cut him off.

“I’m thinking of transferring to university next academic year and I was wondering if I could talk to you about it? Not now, maybe if you have time one evening?”

“I don’t see how I can be of he-”

“Oh, I just… Hannibal went to college overseas and you work in education and I assume you went to college here.” It wasn’t a question and she didn’t even wait for the nod he gave before continuing, “I have no idea what to expect. And I’m kinda worried about it.”

“Oh, Um, I-”

“Great,” She grinned. “Hannibal’s a great cook. Shall we say Wednesday evening at seven? No need to bring anything. Here.” She handed him a business card for the shop which she had hand written their home address on the back of.

Will stood dumbstruck, watching as she walked off, only brought back to reality when Hannibal told him his coffee was ready.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Mischa isn't as subtle as she thinks.

Hannibal hadn’t been completely aware of what Mischa had been talking to Will Graham about until Will had left the shop. And then her exceedingly pleased grin worried him quite a bit.

“Will Graham is coming for dinner Wednesday night,” She smiled at him pleasantly and walked over to the door to flip the sign.

“Mischa.” Hannibal growled, “What have you done?”

“Huh?” She looked back at him with an innocent smile, but then she must have read his expression because her smile dropped. “Shit. Should I…”

Hannibal shook his head, “It’s fine.”

“Right, and again with a little more conviction?” Mischa asked tentatively. “How bad have I messed things up?”

He gave her a stern look to which she winced.

“Oh come on! I thought you guys just needed a little push in the right direction. Have you *seen* the way you look at each other.” Mischa threw up her hands in exasperation.

“And weren’t you the one who told me only a few days ago that it might be that he’s not interested in me at all?” Hannibal scalded.

Mischa blushed even as she looked defiant. “Yeah, that was before he just turned up as the crack of dawn because he clearly couldn’t wait to talk to you.”

“You’re assertion is only partially correct.” Hannibal growled, “He did come to talk, to tell me he wasn’t interested.”

“Oh, shi-” Mischa’s curse was cut off by the ringing of the bell over the door as their second customer of the day came in and Hannibal went back out to the kitchen.

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Will actually tried really hard to run into Hannibal over the next few days in order to discuss dinner, with a view to getting out of it. As he was sure the man would be reasonable enough to understand that it was probably not a great idea.

But the man had gone back to being unavailable in the kitchen and even Mischa seemed aloof. It was always Abigail serving him with a cheer, as though absolutely nothing was wrong, and every

day counted down to Wednesday.

When Wednesday finally came, he tried one last time to speak with Hannibal, but still didn't want to outright ask to talk to him. It was infuriating, and if anything, for some reason, the shop seemed slightly busier than usual. He didn't even have a chance to try and corner Abigail and get her to ask Hannibal to come talk to him, even if he'd wanted to. Not with her run off her feet.

He knew he was on edge when he had to stop himself during one of his afternoon classes from snapping at a student being an ass. Not like he wasn't accustomed to teenage idiots, he usually managed them very well. But today, it took everything in him not to go off at the little shit.

By the time he got home after school and showered, he was numb. He hadn't let people close in a long time, and had never intended to in this town. And he knew he could have got out of this, if he'd made more effort. And he didn't want to think too hard about why he hadn't made that effort.

Will stood in his towel looking into his wardrobe wondering what the hell to wear. Because, for several reasons, Will was not going to be rude enough not to turn up. Again, reasons he didn't want to examine too closely. He could just pretend this was a friendly dinner with a new acquaintance. That was all it was, right?

He looked over a few of his shirts, not wanting to go too dressy, but also knowing he really should be smart.

And aftershave?

Will winced. This wasn't like it was a date. He was going over to talk with Mischa about college. He intended to focus on her exclusively. After their discussion it would be both awkward and inappropriate for him to then spend the evening getting to know Hannibal. He would just keeping talking to Mischa about college… the whole entire evening.

He took a deep breath and let it out as a heavy sigh, knowing that there was no way out of this now. And with that thought, as he walked out to his car, came a feeling of inevitability.

And he wasn't resistant to it. He could go, have a nice dinner and spend some time with Hannibal without it being more than it could be. Right?

Will clenched his jaw and focused on just that as he drove over to the other side of town.

It didn't take twenty minutes, though at first Will wasn't even sure he was in the right place. The address Mischa had given him was definitely this place, but it was unexpectedly the highbrow end of town. All the houses were palatial and beautiful, clearly where the more affluent residents of Wolf Trap lived.

And for a moment that seemed at odds with a coffee shop. Though not at odds with Hannibal Lecter, the way he carried himself and his airs and graces. As Will pulled up outside the perfect looking townhouse that matched the address, he remembered what Mischa had said about Hannibal having been a therapist. Perhaps he'd made good money off that? Or maybe as the only real coffee option in town, business really was just that good?

Will shook his head, it just didn't matter, and stepped out of his car. Even so, he was glad he'd chosen a dress-shirt as he walked up the beautifully paved walkway with manicured lawn either side. He had brought with him a bottle of wine, something recommended at the wine store, within

his price range at least, and now he wondered if it would have been better to not bring anything. He could imagine that people living in a place like this could have champagne for breakfast and his swill would very much not be welcome.

He found his heart was facing and cheeks burning with nerves even before knocking the door. In fact he had to rub his palms on his trousers before doing so, a little sweat gathering there.

At the gentle knock he heard movement inside and then the door was flung open by a thrilled looking Mischa who he was sure must have been waiting just the other side of the door.

“Mr Graham!” She grinned and welcomed him into the house.

“Please,” Will replied as he handed her the bottle of wine, for want of anything else to do, “Call me Will.”

“Sure, Will.” She smiled and looked at the wine, “Thank you for this, it’s really thoughtful.” And then she set off, clearly expecting him to follow.

With another breath in, he did.

*

When Will arrived Hannibal was almost done with preparations and so he looked up and gave a polite smile as Mischa returned from opening the door and they both took a seat at the kitchen counter.

He didn’t miss the way Will’s look flitted to his bare forearms and then quickly away again, but he said nothing. Of course, it would be rude to do so. He would just savour it quietly.

“Can I help at all?” Will asked as Hannibal brought over glasses and poured them all some wine.

“No, not at all. Please,” Hannibal smiled and gestured at the wine before picking up his own.

Before Will could say anything further, Mischa spoke up.

“So, Will, college.” She said before looking at him intently, as though he held all the answers to the universe and not because this had clearly been a ruse on her part and she needed to see it through to prove it wasn’t.

“Um, oh okay,” Will seemed caught off guard facing the question so early in the evening and Hannibal couldn’t blame him, he was surprised himself. Not least because he wasn’t entirely convinced that for Mischa this was more than a ruse to get Will and Hannibal together.

“I went to school at George Washington University, but it was a fair few years ago now. So I don’t know how much-” Will started but was immediately interrupted.

“Oh for sure,” Mischa agreed, “But I figure there is a sort of culture at universities? Like an expectation on the social aspects. Cliques?” Then as though adding an important point she quickly added, “I don’t want to join a sorority.”

Will chuckled at that, “Well, I was never in one so I can’t tell you much about them anyway,” he joked. And Hannibal felt his whole chest warm at how Will was clearly relaxing and how amusing he was.

Mischa shook her head with a chuckle and continued. “I guess I just don’t want to be out of my depth.”

At this Hannibal had to pipe up, “Regardless of what I, her teachers or even Abigail tell her, Mischa is convinced that she isn’t academically capable.”

Will frowned softly and looked between the two Lecters before Mischa clarified, “Well, it’s hard to feel like you are smart when someone else got all the brains in the family.”

She glared fondly at Hannibal and he rolled his eyes. “You are much smarter than I am, I just had the opportunity and need to apply myself.”

The glare dissolved and it was just a fond look then, which she turned to Will to explain.

“When our parents died Hannibal insisted on taking custody of me despite being at medical school. He would study, work shifts in the morgue, then come home and look after me.”

When Will turned a surprised look to him, Hannibal clarified, whilst possibly blushing slightly. “I did employ a nanny paid from our parent’s estate.”

“Still,” Mischa argued, “You worked hard because you had to provide for me.”

There was a moment of silence then as the love and fondness passed between them in a look, which he only realised might be an awkward moment to be part of when Will cleared his throat and then added.

“If this is your way of telling Hannibal you got Abigail pregnant, maybe I should give you some privacy.” Will’s tone was a strange sort of dark humour that Hannibal found he enjoyed greatly. Even more so when it made Mischa laugh so heartily as it did then.

“Yeah this would be awkward.” She confirmed, grinning at Will.

“Look, I don’t know about your brother, because you’re right he does seem like some sort of preternatural egghead. But I can tell you that in my experience upwards of eighty percent of people attending college have no clue what they are doing. And that includes the ones that *have* picked their major.” Will told her firmly, but with the kindness Hannibal expected from a high school teacher. “Some might say that is one of the reasons to go to college. To find out more about who you are, what you like and what you want to do with your life.”

Mischa was smiling so sweetly at Will that Hannibal couldn’t help but do the same.

“And it’s scary,” Will continued, a little softer. “Being away from home. Being somewhere new, but also where there might be pressure for you to act a certain way or do certain things. But you’re a smart kid, I’m sure you know when to walk away from things.”

It didn’t matter how many times he’d tried to articulate this to her, albeit perhaps not as Will had, that he was pleased to see she was taking it on board.

“Thanks, Will.” She said softly.

“No problem,” He smiled. “And always remember, sucking up to your favourite teacher should be done in a very subtle way that achieves high regard and not a restraining order.”

At that Mischa let out a hoot of laughter and Hannibal couldn't help chuckling too.

"Speaking from experience?" Hannibal asked with a grin.

When Will grinned back up at him, Hannibal felt his heart rate kick up a notch. There was no denying that Will Graham was a beautiful man.

"I'll never tell." Will replied, a flat tone but a smirk on his face nonetheless.

Their chuckling was interrupted by the doorbell. To which Hannibal looked up in surprise and Mischa jumped off of her stool so fast she startled Will.

"That's Abigail, I forgot I double booked. Can you save me something?" Mischa said in a rush and then sped from the room. They both watched as she ran down the hallway, grabbed her jacket and rushed out the door.

"Wow. She's not subtle." Will observed.

"No." Hannibal replied, clenching his jaw and feeling on edge about the whole thing.

*

There had been an awkward silence after Mischa left and honestly, Will had considered saying he should go too. After all, the pretense for being there was now gone. But Hannibal had done so much work on dinner, it would be rude.

"Would you like to go through to the dining room?" Hannibal asked, politely breaking the silence.

"Actually, can we just eat here?" Will asked, wincing as he said it. He didn't mean to be rude but was sure it might come across that way. "Less formal." He clarified, when really he wanted to say 'less like a date.'

All the same Hannibal smiled and nodded, "Of course, Will."

Silence fell again, but considerably less awkward as Will watched Hannibal go about his work. He expertly checked each item, moved things, added things, took things out of the oven. It was like watching a show.

"I see why Mischa is intimidated. You appear to be good at everything you turn your hand to." Will chuckled.

At that Hannibal stopped and smiled at him, "I know you like my coffee, but I'm not sure that is everything."

"Oh," Will's cheeks reddened. "I meant. Well, you have your own shop. And Mischa mentioned you had been a therapist. So I assume a medical doctor before that? She's right, it's a lot to live up to."

Hannibal's smile softened and he looked thoughtful.

"I try not to put pressure on her."

“Maybe you haven’t pressured her enough,” Will replied flatly without thinking. His eyes widened and cheeks burned as he hoped the ground would swallow him up. “Shit. I’m sorry, I mean-”

“It’s quite alright.” Hannibal said, soothingly. “I think you’re right. In trying not to be hard on her I’ve made her doubt herself. I’ve been unable to strike the balance she needed me to.”

Will shook his head. “Kids are a work in progress. Believe me, I work with them every day.”

Hannibal hummed and smiled.

“It’s strange, I don’t quite imagine you as a school teacher.” Hannibal finally said as he started to pull everything together and plate up.

“No?” Will chuckled. “Not sure that speaks well of me.”

“You seem hardened. Like a police officer or a private detective in a movie. You don’t take any nonsense.” Hannibal replied as he finished plating and set Will’s dinner in front of him before coming around to take the seat Mischa had vacated.

Will laughed, “That’s my dad. He was a cop. Before he got retired by a gunshot. It… His partner was killed, and he recovered physically but not mentally. He just… couldn’t go back to it.” Will explained, taking a sip of his wine. “I guess he expected me to become a cop back then, but then everything changed. He changed. Went back to working boat motors and we moved all over. New year, new town. Never found what he was looking for I guess.”

“And what was that?” Hannibal asked, softly.

Will let out a sigh and smiled, “Peace.” There was silence between them for a moment. “Anyway, this looks fantastic!” Will changed the conversation and indicated the food.

“Please,” Hannibal gestured for Will to tuck in.

The food was divine. Like nothing Will had ever tasted before.

“This is amazing,” Will said between bites, trying not to devour it like a ravenous dog. “And here I thought your coffee was good!”

Hannibal smiled warmly and replied, “Well, you’ve yet to have coffee here.” He pointed to a metal piece of equipment on a counter that looked like a chemistry set. “I’d like to pride myself that it’s even better than at the shop.”

“Does that thing make coffee or create nuclear fission?” Will asked with a chuckle.

“Coffee, I assure you.” Hannibal returned the smile. “The sort that really gets you out of bed in the morning.”

Will felt his heart jump, and a look passed between them before Hannibal blinked and then looked away, maybe not having meant it to sound like the invitation it had come across as.

Will’s heart fluttered.

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Turns out there's more than dinner on the menu

By dessert Will had to admit that he was enjoying himself more than he had in a very long time.

Three glasses of wine in they seemed to have dispensed with ignoring or not acknowledging the flirting between them. In fact, several times Will had to stop himself leaning in close to the man, and wondering if perhaps sitting across a dining table from each other would have been better. Safer.

“Wow, this is so good.” Will spoke with his mouthful of some sort of chocolate dessert that defied any kind of description beyond heavenly. “I’m not even a huge fan of chocolate, but this?”

Will shook his head and enjoyed the pleased, almost preening smile that the compliment brought to Hannibal’s face.

Silence fell again, comfortable and warm now. And Will enjoyed it. He wanted more of it, but wasn’t really ready to allow himself to have that.

After a moment, Will set down his dessert fork and Hannibal muttered softly, “I hope I have given a good impression, on behalf of the town.”

Will chuckled, “Well, that remains to be seen. But you’ve given a good impression of yourself.” Will raised his glass and tipped it to Hannibal in salutation.

Hannibal frowned for a moment before relaxing back on his stool. “You know, Will, I think you worry too much. You'd be so much more comfortable if you relaxed with yourself. You treat Wolf Trap as the enemy, but perhaps it might surprise you.”

“Oh, I’m sure it’s full of surprises,” Will chuckled. “I grew up in places like this.”

“Really? Well that explains quite a bit.” Hannibal raised a brow and smirked.

“Don’t psychoanalyse me, Doctor. You won’t like me when I’m psychoanalysed.” Will smirked.

“I wouldn’t even attempt it. Not least because it’s hard to take someone seriously when they have food on their face.” Hannibal smirked softly as he indicated Will’s mouth. Will raised his napkin and patted his lips.

They chuckled together and then when that died off, they continued to gaze at each other, both twisted slightly on their stools to almost face each other.

“This was lovely,” Will finally said, breaking the silence and rubbing his belly as though to make the point.

“I would be happy to cook for you anytime, Will.” Hannibal’s words were a low rumble that went directly to Will’s groin.

They gazed at each other for a moment, and when Hannibal leaned in, Will didn’t move back. He watched as Hannibal’s hand came up to his face and then his thumb swiped over Will’s lower lip.

“Chocolate,” Hannibal explained, his words breathless.

Will swallowed, Hannibal’s hand still hovering, not quite pulling back and god he wanted the man to touch him again.

Without even thinking, Will grabbed Hannibal’s hand in his own and placed it on his cheek. Hannibal didn’t resist, running his thumb over Will’s lips again as Will melted into the touch and closed his eyes.

He wanted this so much. Wanted Hannibal. Enough to block out that voice of reason that was telling him this was exactly what he wanted to avoid.

“Will?” Hannibal’s question was little more than a whisper, and in lieu of a reply which might have been altogether more sensible, Will opened his lips and sucked Hannibal’s thumb into his mouth.

Will didn’t resist when Hannibal cupped his face then drew him quickly forward, and moments later the thumb was gone and had been replaced with Hannibal’s lips against his own. The man tasted like sweet wine and chocolate and Will couldn’t help but groan.

Will opened to the kiss as Hannibal drew him forward and the only thing stopping them from completely ravishing each other was the awkward position on the kitchen stools.

With a groan Will stood, and Hannibal rose too, with a stumble they were both on their feet and then Will’s back was against the nearest wall. Hannibal pinned him there and continued to kiss him hungrily.

Will pulled back for a breath, “Fuck,” he muttered, knowing they should stop. This was such a bad idea and yet with the press of it against his thigh, he was unable to stop himself sliding his hand down the front of Hannibal’s pants and feeling his hard cock.

They both groaned at the touch.

He was hard and a good handful. Will found himself desperate to know whether he was cut or not. He wanted to know every fucking inch of the man in a way he hadn’t wanted to know about anyone in a long time. Shit, probably not ever really. Not as intensely as this.

Will hesitated for a moment, gazing at Hannibal. His hair had come loose, falling in front of his eyes, and he looked absolutely feral. Will loved it.

Then Hannibal was kissing him again, slowly grinding against his thigh as Will’s own cock plumped up to fully erect.

“Fuck,” Will said again, breathing hard against Hannibal’s mouth. And then, any thought of resolve gone, he reached his hands down and began to unbuckle Hannibal’s belt.

Will worked as quickly as he could, desperate to get on his knees and suck the man off. It had been so long since he’d sucked cock, and fuck he wanted it. He wanted to feel Hannibal in his mouth,

feel him come down his throat and-

There was no mistaking the click of the front door opening and then a louder click as it closed.

Will and Hannibal jumped apart as though electrocuted, and Hannibal quickly slicked his hands back in his hair to try and right it.

“I’m back, Han.” Mischa called from the hallway, a rustling noise as she hung up her jacket. “I ate with Abi in the end. I’m off to bed. Night.” She called out and then there were footfalls on the stairs before either of them could form a response.

Hannibal looked dishevelled and wonderful, and Will was sure he looked as equally unkempt. And Will wanted nothing more than to ask Hannibal where his bedroom was so they could continue this somewhere private.

But that wasn’t going to happen.

As Hannibal took a step towards him, Will took a step back and sighed as he shook his head.

“I should go.” He said quietly, looking down. Not wanting to see Hannibal’s expression.

“Will, I apologise if I-”

“No, no,” Will refuted, finally looking up to see the frown there. The disappointment and concern. “I just… we shouldn’t have. I shouldn’t have. It’s not fair. I like you Hannibal, I really do. But I can’t ask you to go sneaking around and keeping my secret. I’m either out or I’m not, and right now I’m not. And that’s just not okay to pull someone else into. I feel like I’d be dragging you into my world.”

“I’d get there on my own, but I’d appreciate the company.” Hannibal replied softly, and it made Will’s chest ache all the more.

Will shook his head.

Hannibal’s jaw tightened but he nodded his understanding. “I like you Will. And after this evening, I believe I might like you more than I’ve liked anyone in a very long time.” Hannibal admitted and the words cut through Will’s chest and made it hard to breath. “But I understand.”

Even as he said it he cupped Will’s face as he had earlier and Will didn’t stop him. Hannibal closed the space between them and kissed Will so tenderly, so gently, that he wanted to melt into it. But it was clearly a goodbye kiss, which was for the best.

Hannibal pulled back, “I do understand, and whilst usually this is something I would avoid, I will say that, should you wish, I am more than willing to come into your world, to sneak around like teenagers if it means getting to know you better.”

Will let out a chuckle at that and put his hand over Hannibal’s sliding it from his face and squeezing it before releasing it.

“Perhaps just consider it,” Hannibal smiled.

Will nodded, though he had no intention of doing so.

“I can see myself out.” Will said softly, before turning and leaving the house.

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Hannibal couldn’t deny his disappointment. Nor the raging erection that Will Graham had left him with.

He decided to leave the dishes until morning, the kitchen now feeling like the last place he wanted to be. In fact, all he desired, if he was not allowed to desire Will, was a cold shower and his bed.

Hannibal turned off the kitchen light and left it all there.

The shower in his en suite came up to temperature and then he turned it down to as cool as he could bear. He wasn’t planning to torture himself, and he knew well enough that there was no definitive proof that cold showers quelled erections, but it was more than that.

He just wanted to feel like he was having a cold shower when getting up on a busy day to make sure one was really awake. Perhaps that was the technique needed to remove Will Graham from his mind.

Once the temperature was barely lukewarm, Hannibal stepped in and shuddered.

His body jolted with the sensation but he was still erect even after a few minutes. And what was more, he was still thinking about Will.

About that kiss, and that touch. What had been about to happen.

Hannibal disliked denying himself anything if he could help it. He wasn’t exactly a hedonist, but perhaps he might have been, if he hadn’t had to care for Mischa.

And certainly was not prudish enough to not be aroused by thoughts of what might have happened. So, whilst it would perhaps have been the better thing to try and ignore it all and hope his physical reaction would subside, Hannibal hated to deny himself unnecessarily.

With a growl he turned off the water altogether, immediately slightly warmer for it, and took his cock into his hand. He pressed his free hand to the wall, holding himself there and looking down, imaging Will on his knees licking and nuzzling him.

Hannibal was stroking himself roughly, his hand loose but fast. Then just as he started to build to climax, he slowed. He settled into slow, long pulls, his mind’s eye supplying an image of Will Graham taking him into his mouth, sucking him to the back of his throat.

He would be gentle with Will. He imagined running his hand into Will’s hair and holding him there. Not directing him, not dominating him, just feeling him there.

When Hannibal began to end each stroke with a pummel and squeeze of his crown, trying to imagine Will swallowing around his cock, it was too much to pull back from. He sped up just a little, seeing himself gently fucking into Will’s mouth.

And then he imagined Will’s hand coming up to cup his balls and slide up to his ass, a finger slipping between his cheeks.

With a groan it was all over. The image started to fade as Hannibal pumped through his climax, spattering the shower wall with his release. The sound of his panting echoing around the tiles.

*

Will was glad of the weekend and the break from work, but more so the break from the coffee shop. He didn't intend to avoid the place, that would just make it all worse, he was sure. But he did want to have a few days to get his mind back together. As it was he'd already avoided the place Thursday and Friday, but he couldn't keep doing that. Hannibal didn't deserve that.

On Monday when he got to the coffee shop, he hoped that they could just ignore the way the evening had gone, and the couple of days of avoidance. Dinner had been fantastic and it had been nice to get to know Hannibal. A little too nice as it turned out. But they had to move past that.

With a sigh, Will opened the door, unsure how he felt to see Hannibal behind the counter. Maybe he had hoped it would be one of the young women and that he could avoid Hannibal? He wasn't sure.

"Hi," Will said, a little more sheepishly than he'd intended.

There were a few people sitting in the shop, a couple waiting at the end counter for their drinks, but no queue. No time to prepare.

"Good morning," Hannibal said with a smile. "The usual?"

"Yeah," Will replied with a smile of his own. One that widened slightly as Hannibal tried to pull the takeaway cup from the stack and fumbled with it, almost dropping it. There was the slightest touch of pink to Hannibal's cheeks.

"Just a moment," Hannibal said, and Will liked to think he was a little flustered, as much as he shouldn't. He shouldn't want Hannibal to feel any kind of way about him.

"Oh, Will. Hey!" Mischa appeared next to her brother, maybe sensing that he needed to be rescued. "Have you got one of these yet?" She reached over the counter to hand him a small card.

"Uh, thanks." Will replied, turning it over in his hand.

"It's already got a stamp on it for you. You get six stamps and then you get a free drink. Abi's idea." Mischa explained.

"Oh, okay, thanks." Will smiled, taking out his wallet and opening it as she walked away.

When he looked back up, Hannibal was standing there watching him, a soft smile on his face. Will was sure there was something there, closer to adoration than lust, and it was mesmerising. And Will wanted to give in to feeling it too.

Hannibal cleared his throat and Will blinked, taking out ten dollars and paying before Hannibal said, "It'll be ready at the end counter shortly."

Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Things go from awkward to tense!

Life, for the most part, seemed to return to the previously established normality of Will's life in this small town.

Or at least as normal as it was going to get with a handsome shop owner, and an almost hook up in the air. But Will felt that they had gotten past it.

Actually, that was a lie. They were clearly both not past it, but rather ignoring it. Ignoring the connection they felt when they talked to each other over the coffee shop counter. Ignoring the light flirting and the way they looked at each other.

They seemed to fall into a new rhythm of interacting along a fine line that both of them were comfortable with. Harmless, polite conversation that veered close to gentle flirting all too often. But of course no intention of it leading anywhere.

So what if it left an ache in his gut every time he walked out with his ristretto in hand?

Will stood in line, watching Hannibal serve the people ahead of him with a tiny ball of sour jealousy in his gut. Hannibal was so charming to everyone, he drew a smile or even a soft chuckle as he flattered. Will would have suspected that Hannibal's interest in him was no more than this same polite interest he had in anyone else, but for the fact of what had happened that night at dinner.

Over a week had passed since then and yet it was often on Will's mind.

More than once he'd thought about what it would be like to actually date the man, and whether he was ready to *out* himself in the small town.

He hadn't heard anything derogatory aimed at the Lecter's, and he'd seen at least a handful of other same sex couples around the town, openly walking around hand in hand.

Maybe Wolf Trap was okay?

But even so, every time he thought about it, his mind took him back to those times when he'd been growing up in just this sort of town. It all seemed wholesome on the surface, but then a group of rowdy assholes would corner you in an alley and beat the shit out of you whilst throwing slurs around. Or you'd be the target of every school bully. Spat on in the street by grown adults.

Will shuddered, feeling a twinge in his ribs at the thought, at the memory of how they'd been broken more than once. In a town just like this.

"Will?"

He was roused from his thoughts by Hannibal's concerned tone and then realisation that it was his turn in line.

"Sorry," Will muttered and moved forward. "The usual." He requested, sedate and brought low by those persistent thoughts.

"Are you alright?" Hannibal asked, concern etched in his expression.

Will pulled on a smile and shook his head dismissively, "Just a few things on my mind."

Hannibal returned the smile, though the concern was still there.

"Understandable," Hannibal continued as he began to prepare Will's drink. "Teaching is a stressful, if noble, profession I would imagine."

Will nodded mutely and took out his wallet to pay.

"Oh, the loyalty card," He recalled and opened his wallet to tug it out and claim his free drink. As he pulled he frowned, it was wedged in. He tugged again, a little harder and that time it flew out of the wallet, his hand swinging back, and so did the condom it had evidently been jammed against.

Will swallowed, eyes wide in horror as it landed on the counter. He quickly grabbed it and shoved it in his pocket, hoping that no one had noticed.

But of course Hannibal had. He looked momentarily crest fallen and then pulled a smile back on his face.

"Looks like you're all set for the weekend," Hannibal joked softly, but there was a bite in his words that Will couldn't miss as he plucked the card from Will's hand and started towards the cash register. "I'll get you a fresh card." He continued.

"Shit, I… it's not what it looks like." Will replied quickly, still trying to keep his voice low considering there was still a short line behind him.

"You really have no need to explain to me," Hannibal gave him a warm and comforting smile, that hid so much more that his eyes were able to. There were strong emotions raging there, lust, hurt, jealousy. All of it served to make Will shiver and he let out a shuddering breath.

Hannibal held out a new card to Will and continued, "Your drink will be at the collection counter shortly."

"Please Hannibal, let me explain." Will implored softly.

Just as Hannibal opened his mouth to answer a throat was cleared politely behind Will, and he looked back to see the line had grown.

"Shit," He muttered under his breath, taking back the proffered card from between Hannibal's fingers and, red faced, headed to the collection counter.

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Will arrived at school consumed by thoughts of what had happened. His coffee cooled on his desk as he replayed those few moments over and over. The condom, the look on Hannibal's face, not

being able to explain. He shouldn't be bothered, it shouldn't matter. But it did. It really did.

He didn't want Hannibal to think that there was anyone else. Even if there wasn't going to be anything between them, he didn't want that to be in Hannibal's mind. That Will was happy to be with someone else but not him, after everything he'd said at dinner.

Between classes, he paced his office.

The thought of waiting until the morning to explain to Hannibal, set him on edge. He was barely able to concentrate in his morning classes as urgency ate at him. Every moment that went by with Hannibal thinking the worst about why Will happened to have a condom in his wallet, was a moment too long.

Hannibal had been right in some ways, Will didn't need to explain. They owed each other nothing, and yet why did Will feel that was a lie?

"Fuck," He muttered under his breath as the bell rang for lunch. He had to go and explain because he wanted Hannibal to know that there wasn't anyone in his life right now. Anyone else, his mind corrected.

It was pretty stressful how much Will wanted Hannibal, and if anything, this was making Will reconsider being closeted. It was all he could think of as he grabbed his keys and went out the door, heading for the school's parking lot.

He didn't want Hannibal to think badly of him, because he wanted Hannibal to think only the best of him. He wanted Hannibal to think fondly of him.

As Will drove back down to the high street, he started to recite what he would say. "That condom is older than time, totally forgot it was in there."

Would that be enough? Should he also explain that he hadn't had a hook-up in… damn, a long, long time. Long enough that the condom would probably turn to dust if he opened the wrapper. He hadn't even known it had been squashed in there, but it explained the issues he'd had with getting his cards in and out of his wallet. And the loyalty card seemed to be the last straw.

Will parked his car and took a breath before getting out, repeating the words in his head as he made his way along the street to the coffee shop.

He fixed his eyes on the counter through the door even as he opened it, searching for Hannibal and ready to just come out with it all and-

And then what? What would the expectation be after this explanation? Was he going to come out?

Will winced and hesitated. He looked away from the counter, where currently only Abigail stood, and back towards the door.

Will's breath hitched.

In the corner table next to the window, Hannibal sat with a young man. They were both leaning across the table and talking in hushed tones. Will wouldn't have been able to hear them from that distance anyway, even if he desperately wanted to. The conversation was obviously intense, and the way the younger man looked at Hannibal-

A sour feeling pooled in Will's gut. One that almost pushed up bile when the young man reached over and took hold of Hannibal's hand.

So intimate. So fervent.

Will was rooted to the spot, staring at the interaction and knowing he should go and forget it all. Or order coffee and pretend nothing was wrong? What should he do?

"Will? Need a lunchtime fix?" Abigail chuckled from behind the counter. At that Hannibal looked up, realising he was there, and met Will's eyes.

He dropped the young man's hand, practically tossing it aside and then stood, wide-eyed. A loss of his usually cool demeanour. Because he'd been caught out. Maybe Hannibal actually was just that interested in everyone after all.

"Will-" Hannibal started, but Will smiled and waved a dismissive hand.

"I have to go, I just remembered I have a meeting." He turned and walked out, ignoring Hannibal who strode after him.

Out in the street he didn't hear the door close behind him, caught by Hannibal who was then catching up to him.

"Please, Will." Hannibal implored. "Let me explain."

Will stopped and chuckled, shaking his head. "No need to explain anything, right? None of my business."

Hannibal's expression hardened, anger and sadness there before he concealed it. "You left, I assumed what you saw-"

"Is none of my business," Will cut in and then started to walk off. "You can date whoever you like, wherever you like. You don't owe me anything." Will wanted to add - despite what you said.

"It's not what it looked like, Will." Hannibal called after him.

Will carried on walking.

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Hannibal moaned and rolled in his bed.

It wasn't his throbbing erection that woke him, but the feel of it grinding as he rutted against the sheets beneath him like a teenager.

He was still half asleep, practically still immersed in the erotic dream he had been having. He allowed it to continue unimpeded as he continued to writhe.

In his dream he was being intimate with a patient. But it wasn't one of his patients of old, it was Will Graham. The man had arrived at his old office in Baltimore, a smart shirt, a haircut. He'd told Hannibal sensually and commanding that he wanted to resume his therapy.

Hannibal had been immediately hard, both in and out of the dream.

Will had come in, settled down in one of those lovely chairs he'd had and admittedly missed. Will was talking about having to deal with his feelings for Hannibal, his therapist.

"This is inappropriate, Will." Hannibal had responded, receiving an amused chuckle.

"Who should I talk to about my desires if not my therapist?"

"If I am the subject of those desires then-"

"You know you are Hannibal." Will stood, closing the distance between the two opposite chairs and loomed over Hannibal for a moment.

Would he drop to his knees? Would he pull Hannibal forward and demand his mouth?

Hannibal was breathless with the anticipation as Will just stood there, amused and enjoying the power he held over Hannibal.

With a hand on the back of the chair, Will leaned over, whispering in Hannibal's ear as his other hand went to palm Hannibal's cock. "You want me to fuck you, don't you?"

Hannibal gasped and let out a whimper, his cock pulsing with need.

"Want me to push my thick cock inside you, pound you until you come untouched." Will continued, gripping Hannibal's shaft through his pants.

"So vulgar-" Hannibal scalded, which was met with a throaty laugh.

"You love it. You want it. Show me how much you want it." Will demanded as he stood, releasing both the chair and Hannibal's cock.

He remained looming, a raised brow as he waited.

With a trembled breath, Hannibal moved forward to the edge of his seat, looking up to meet Will's eyes before dropping down to the floor on his knees.

As he slid open Will's belt, Will let out a hiss and involuntarily thrust forward. Hannibal made quicker work of it then, freeing Will's cock and immediately taking him into his mouth.

Hannibal's own cock ached at the thought of having Will in his mouth. He groaned and turned his face in his pillow, chasing the phantom appendage.

With a moan, still not allowing himself to fully surface into wakefulness, Hannibal slid his hand into his pyjama pants and began to stroke himself. First slow and gentle, but within moments, it was vigorous and needy.

Will's fingers slid into Hannibal's hair, holding him there as he began to fuck into his mouth.

Hannibal groaned, enjoying being used in a way he never did whilst awake. A sign of his desire for Will, his absolute desire to want whatever he would give.

Will shuffled his foot, kicking it between Hannibal's knees before groaning, "Touch yourself. I want you to come."

Hannibal moaned around Will's cock and complied. The dream seemed to have relieved them of their clothes. They were both naked now, their bodies made all the more beautiful by the wonderful mood lighting in the office.

He looked up at Will, wanting to drink him in, but when he tried there was no focus. As though a fog stopped him from seeing the details. It was frustrating and he grunted. In response Will thrust in harder.

Hannibal placed one hand on Will's hip, just resting there, feeling the sweat sheened flesh beneath as he pumped his cock with the other.

He was so close, and from the noises Will made, he was sure he was too.

He was going to come. He was-

Hannibal let out a hard grunt and then a long groan as his climax hit him, hard and sudden. It made him shudder as he continued to stroke himself through it, drifting away from his dream and into wakefulness. Leaving him to simply imagine how it would feel to have Will Graham come in his mouth.

He flopped back on the bed, filled with renewed determination.

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Hannibal explains everything and Will makes a decision about being out in Wolf Trap.

Hannibal wasn't surprised that he didn't see Will for the rest of the week. And now it was the weekend, so there was no chance he'd see him, not until Monday at least.

Perhaps it was for the best? Will had clearly not wanted to talk with him, or let him explain. And things had already the potential to become deeply awkward after the condom had dropped from Will's wallet.

Hannibal liked to imagine that there was a perfectly good explanation for that. After all, there was for his own perceived indiscretion.

Of all the times for Will to drop by the shop, there couldn't have been any less convenient or more inflammatory. Not just with Will, but with Randall too.

The fact that Randall had left by the time Hannibal returned to the shop was deeply worrying. But there was only so much he could do in that regard. The young man had not contacted him since, so perhaps he was worrying over nothing?

And, perhaps there was nothing he could do about Will either.

But that wouldn't stop him trying. At least just to explain. And then after he had, he would leave it to Will as to what happened next, if anything.

"Hey," Mischa called from the doorway as she walked in.

Hannibal looked up to see his sister bundled up as she came in for her shift.

"It's getting cold out there." She stated the obvious but made the point to come around the counter and press her chilled hand to his face.

He winced and glared good-naturedly at her, to which she chuckled and went out back to take off her coat.

"So, hey." She called back to him, "I was running some errands and I saw Will Graham coming out of the pet shop. We talked for a minute, he seems good." She told him as he carried out going about his work. "You should go over when you finish work." She said.

Hannibal looked around at her, more quickly than he'd meant to.

"Did he suggest that?"

She raised a brow at him but the smirk he expected didn't come. "No, but… I think you should. I'm not an idiot Hannibal. Whatever's going on, you need to go clear the air. Abigail told me how he reacted when he saw you with that guy that came in asking for you. Whatever's happening, you just need to go talk with him."

Hannibal muttered a response under his breath, dismissive as he went back to his work.

As the hours ticked by her words kept coming back to him. Not just that he should go see Will, but that Abigail had noticed the reaction, and that Will had been at a petstore. Will had no pets that Hannibal was aware of and now he was intrigued.

He didn't say anything to Mischa and Abigail when he left the shop mid-afternoon, but Hannibal did indeed go to Will's house.

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Will looked up from where he sat on the porch as the car pulled up.

He was wrapped up in a warm coat but enjoying the afternoon sun that flooded the well appointed porch of his little house.

He didn't need to see the driver to know it was Hannibal's car, and his jaw clenched.

Will really didn't need this. He wished that he and Hannibal could move on, but that was easier said than done, not least because of his own jealousy, as much as he'd like to not admit to that. He couldn't get the image of that intimate meeting out of his mind, the way the young man looked at Hannibal.

Will started down from the porch and was ready when the door opened, coming to stand next to it so that even as he stepped out, Hannibal was forced to remain by the door.

"What are you doing here, Hannibal? And don't say to explain." Will growled.

Hannibal smiled gently and shook his head, "Not to explain, but to talk. Maybe to take a walk." He looked over Will's shoulder at the small house as though looking for something. "Mischa said you have a new pet?"

"No, not yet." Will replied, snipped words, not wanting to make conversation.

"A dog?" Hannibal asked, as though he was oblivious to the stilted answers he was getting and the fact that Will clearly didn't want to talk. Which Will was sure was not the case.

"Yes." Will replied sharply.

Hannibal drew in a deep breath and released it. Not a sigh of exasperation but of defeat.

"I've come at a bad time," Hannibal conceded, and then nodded his head to his car. "I did bring over coffee for us. Notes of chocolate, very warming and very rich. Like a ristretto for the weekend." He said with a smile. "I'll leave one for you."

Will pinched the bridge of his nose as Hannibal leaned in to grab one of the takeaway cups. Hannibal was nothing if not persistent. And damn, it did smell good.

Will let out a sigh.

“I was just about to go for a walk, if you want to join me.”

Hannibal straightened up with a smile and nodded. “I would like that very much.”

Will stood back as Hannibal reached back into the car for his own cup and then closed it up behind him.

Will knew he probably shouldn’t have offered, that really there was no point in them talking all this through, but once again he couldn’t help but be selfish in wanting the man’s company.

All the same, he was tense as they began to walk.

He slipped his free hand into his pocket to keep warm, the coffee grasped firmly in the other. No possibility of giving into any temptation to reach out to Hannibal and have a replay of their dinner.

Hannibal fell into step beside him as he began to walk along the well trodden path towards the treeline.

“There aren’t really any fences on the property, I’m starting to try and work out where I need to fix some up. I’d like the dog to have somewhat free rein.” Will felt compelled to explain. “Get a doggy door for when I’m not home.”

“Do you plan to fence the entire property?” Hannibal asked, returning the pleasant conversation as he sipped at his coffee.

Will shook his head, “Nah, not into the woods. Just a little around the house and then into the treeline to give the dog some variety of trees to mark.”

Will looked over as he said it and saw Hannibal’s smile, soft and fond.

They walked for a few more minutes in silence before Hannibal spoke again.

“I’m glad to get you alone, Will. It seems a rare possibility.”

Will huffed a chuckle before Hannibal could continue, “I’m not sure us being alone together is a great idea.”

“I know you said I needn’t explain, but I feel I must. Regardless of whatever may or may not ever be between us, I don’t like knowing that you think poorly of me.” Hannibal said, delicately.

Will clenched his jaw and stopped, he turned to look at Hannibal and leaned back against a tree.

“I don’t think poorly of you Hannibal,” Will replied and then with a sigh continued, “Okay, if you really must explain.” He conceded, taking another drink of his coffee. It really did taste good and that softened Will a little.

“The young man you saw me with is an ex-patient, Randall Tier. I was his therapist many years ago, when he was a teenager. I worried at the time that his interest in me was more than on a professional level, but I knew it wasn’t uncommon for people to develop a crush on their therapists. Especially as, at that time, I was one of very few people in his life that knew he was questioning his

sexuality." Hannibal paused and rubbed his free hand over his face. "It was almost natural that he develop a crush on someone in my position, as he perceived it."

"When I stopped practising and moved here, I referred him on. And it… didn't go well. Until I moved he would show up at my office. Also at a few places nearby, the local restaurant where I sometimes had lunch with professional colleagues."

"Did you call the police?" Will asked, genuinely concerned.

Hannibal nodded, "I did. I started proceedings for a restraining order, but then the deal went through here and we moved. And it just… didn't seem necessary anymore."

Will shook his head, eyes wide as he tried to process that the man who had been in such an intense conversation with Hannibal was in fact essentially a stalker.

"Hannibal, what is he doing here? What's going on? Have you called the police?" Will asked, frowning.

Hannibal's expression hardened. "The day you saw us was the first time I'd seen him in years. He didn't say how he found me, but he came in and demanded to talk to me as though he were... a jilted lover."

"Shit. Hannibal, this is… This isn't ok."

"I agree, I've spoken with the local police, and I'm in the process of getting the restraining order. He's not been back since that one time. My hope is that I got through to him."

"What did you say to him?" Will asked tentatively, he didn't want to overstep, but it was Hannibal that had raised this after all.

"I tried to cajole him without outright humouring him. I told him it wasn't appropriate that he come see me in my place of work. And that if he continued to do so I would need to take some action." Hannibal explained.

And in that moment Will could see that there was something beneath Hannibal's cool veneer. Pain, maybe a little fear, though not wholly for himself.

"Do you think he's dangerous?" Will asked, pushing off from the tree and stepping closer to Hannibal.

Hannibal shook his head, "I didn't think so back then. But I didn't really consider whether or not he might be. He was a troubled teenager, but he never struck me as dangerous. I just. I hadn't realised how difficult it would be having him there. In the coffee shop, so near to Mischa, to Abigail. If it were just myself I'd have perhaps been more forceful. But-"

"You didn't want to put them in harm's way." Will replied softly and nodded his understanding.

Hannibal cleared his throat, "I just wanted you to understand that it wasn't how I assumed it might have looked."

"Jeez Hannibal, I don't care about that." Will replied, realising that it was the truth. The misunderstanding and his feelings over it didn't matter any more.

Will reached out and placed his free hand on Hannibal's arm. "Is there anything I can do?" He wasn't even sure what he was offering.

Hannibal shook his head, "I appreciate the offer, but all I can do now is wait for the restraining order and hope I don't have to have it enforced."

Will clenched his jaw to stop himself replying. Offering to stay over or something. Anything that might offer some comfort or protection, if necessary.

"I… Nothing can happen to Mischa." Hannibal said, more to himself than anything, that was clear as he looked off into the distance.

Will nodded his understanding, he already knew that Hannibal had raised Mischa since she was a child. And that he'd already given up so many things for her.

"I can't even begin to understand," Will said softly. "You've essentially been a single parent this whole time. She might be grown up now but you've always had that responsibility for her safety. It can't have been easy."

"In some respects. Though with the wealth of our family and my income, I could afford nannies and good schools. So it wasn't the struggle that it is for many." Hannibal was politely dismissive in acknowledging his privilege.

"Even so, she's everything to you, that much is clear." Will squeezed Hannibal's arm and then went to remove his hand, realising how long he'd had it resting there.

Before he could withdraw, Hannibal placed his own hand over Will's keeping it in place.

"I do appreciate your concern, Will. And thank you for giving me the opportunity to explain. I didn't like the thought of ill feeling between us, regardless of what does or doesn't happen."

Will smiled and slowly pulled his hand away as much as he didn't want to. He'd have liked to keep it there. He'd like to kiss the man, hold him and comfort him. But that boat had likely already sailed, and he wasn't sure he should jump on board even if it hadn't.

With a sigh, Will turned and started back towards the house, Hannibal falling into step with him until they were almost at the house.

Will looked back to see Hannibal walking to his car and he warred with himself over whether he should stop him. He wanted to stop him and invite him inside, talk some more. Hold him. Kiss him.

"Hannibal, wait." The words were out of his mouth before he could stop himself and he didn't miss the hopeful expression when Hannibal turned to him.

Will scrubbed the back of his neck with his free hand, feeling heat on his cheeks. No matter what he wanted he had to try and be at least a little sensible.

"I, um… I like you. You know that. And, I guess. I've been worried about what it would be like to be out in a small town and I've not been ready for that. Not after everything…" He trailed off, not wanting to get into that, all the shit in his past. "I just don't want to miss out on a good thing because I'm not ready right this moment."

"I told you I'd be happy to wait-" Hannibal started but Will shook his head.

“And I told you I couldn’t ask you to do that. But just, all this, with your ex-patient? It just puts a few things in perspective. And I still have a few of my own issues to work through, but maybe we could… not avoid each other?”

Will’s words were tentative and he was relieved when Hannibal smiled.

“I would like that very much. I enjoy our interactions.”

“Yeah,” Will let out a heavy sigh. “I do too.”

There was a pause for a moment until Will finally continued, “I’d really like to go on a date. To see if this could be *something*, but-”

“You don’t want to be out in this small town,” Hannibal nodded.

Will nodded in reply and took a breath before continuing, “I just… I’m not there yet, as much as I want to be. I…” He considered for a moment before continuing. “I was thinking about taking a drive out of town next weekend. To go for a hike and some lunch. Look out some good spots for when I get that dog.”

“Would you like some company?” Hannibal asked with a knowingly sly smile, “I happen to be free.”

“Yeah, yeah I would.” Will replied, his heart racing as he tried to hide his sigh of relief. “I’ll pick you up Saturday morning, around ten?”

“It’s a date.” Hannibal smiled, and Will felt his face flush, hoping it wasn’t obvious in the chill air.

Hannibal opened his car door and reached in to stow his empty cup before straightening up again.

“I do have one request though,”

“Sure,” Will replied, his brows knit in confusion.

“Maybe on the drive over you can tell me all about the condom in your wallet.”

Will groaned and shook his head, enjoying Hannibal’s teasing smile all the same.

“Yeah, I guess I can do that.” He agreed. A wide smile on his face and a flutter in his chest as he said goodbye and watched Hannibal drive away.

Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

> Just as it seems Will and Hannibal might be moving towards something together, serious problems arise.

Despite the fact that Hannibal had stayed outside and not even entered his little house, it had felt strangely empty all afternoon.

Will wasn't the most sociable of people, but he found he enjoyed Hannibal's company and could stand a great deal more of it. But with that came the ache of loneliness, an ache he didn't like to feel. He figured it was a combination of the enjoyment and the ache that resulted in the lack of any feelings of weirdness or anxiety over their fixing a date.

He wouldn't have been surprised if he'd immediately have regretted it, but in fact, he was looking forward to it.

There was still a niggling guilt at having Hannibal leave town in order for them to go on a date, but he knew that he understood.

It wasn't just being an 'out' highschool teacher in a small town, and that was bad enough. It was all those memories and the twinges of pain at the thought of the times he was beat up as a kid in places just like this. It was a trauma, he knew that, and one that wasn't easy to move on from. As horrible as it was to think it, he needed to know that Hannibal was worth being out for.

Will was still thinking about Hannibal when he headed to bed that evening.

He lay there looking up at the ceiling and wondering what it would have been like if they had hooked up after dinner that night. Or if he hadn't let Hannibal leave earlier.

Clearly they were both very attracted to each other, and wanted each other. And what was there not to want? Despite his interesting sense of style, Hannibal was graceful with a strong if lithe build. Will couldn't help but remember what it was like to be pressed against that body.

And neither could his cock.

When he began to get hard he winced for only a moment before giving into the inevitability of it.

Will pushed his hand under his waistband and began to slowly stroke himself. Images of Hannibal in the coffeeshop giving way to his imagination, and picturing the sort of office Hannibal might have had as a therapist. How he might have dressed. No doubt three piece suits all the way.

Will let out a groan and stroked a thumb over the wet head of his cock before starting to pump himself with a little more vigor.

He imagined going to Lecter's office, pulling him over his desk by his tie and kissing him hard.

They'd both be desperate and he'd waste no time in stalking around the desk and roughly pulling Hannibal's pants open and down, getting them just below his ass before bending him over his own desk.

Not wanting to waste his fantasy with practical concerns, Hannibal was ready and open for him as he slid right in.

The doctor begged for him to go harder and deeper as Will fisted his cock in time to his imagined thrusts.

"Hannibal," Will groaned, biting down on his lower lip and slipping another hand into his shorts. He tugged and squeezed at his balls as he continued to pump into his fist, his hips rocking so much that his bed springs began to protest.

"Fuck, fuuuuuck…" Will cried out when he spilled, suddenly and intensely coming all over his hand and inside his shorts.

He lay there trying to catch his breath, hoping that one day he could do more than just imagine sex with Hannibal Lecter.

*

Hannibal was ready when Will pulled up outside his house on the crisp morning.

He wore suitable footwear and had packed a small satchel of snacks and refreshments. He wasn't someone usually interested in hiking, but he found himself eager to spend time with Will Graham away from people.

He was so eager, that as the allotted time approached, he took all his items outside and waited on the stoop.

And Hannibal couldn't help that his heart skipped a beat when Will's face came into view and he was smiling. Not just a friendly smile, but one of those smiles that can't be contained. Had he really just made Will Graham smile like that? The thought made his body hum.

Hannibal grabbed the bag of provisions and the large thermos of the coffee Will had enjoyed so much, and went immediately to the vehicle.

Will was still smiling as he leaned over and opened the door for Hannibal, pushing it far enough that Hannibal was able to easily open it the rest of the way and get in with his items in hand.

Will took the bag and placed it on the backseat and then smiled even wider at the thermos Hannibal still had in hand.

"Good morning," Hannibal said, his own grin so wide it hurt his face.

"Morning to you too," Will practically drawled, and it made Hannibal's heart flutter. He seemed so much more relaxed with himself.

It was clear that whilst Will Graham was grumpy but flirtatious, there was also a more playful side to him that he didn't often let out. And Hannibal found he very much enjoyed experiencing it.

Will was still smiling as Hannibal shut his door and belted up, and for a moment they just gazed at each other fondly. Then Will did something quite unexpected.

The movement was slow, slow enough that Hannibal could have pulled back. But he was too dumbstruck to react even if he had wanted to, when Will leaned across and pressed a soft, chaste kiss to Hannibal's lips.

When he pulled back, Will's expression was questioning, a slight concern there that Hannibal wanted to alleviate. Reassurance he wanted to give that he was quite receptive.

"It *is* a good morning." Hannibal smiled and placed his hand on Will's knee. Just resting it there as Will looked at the road with a grin and pulled away from the kerb.

*

The walk up from the parking area was beautiful, especially with the air so crisp and clear.

The cool weather meant that the slight exertion of the gentle climb into the woodlands didn't leave them sweaty. And the skies were blue and wide, allowing a great view the higher they got.

All the same, Will couldn't keep his eyes off Hannibal. The few places where the track became single file, he enjoyed following behind and watching his ass. He enjoyed watching him side on as they walked. He enjoyed how close they had to walk together on some parts of the path. He wanted more of it.

An hour in and they were near the lookout at the top of the trail they'd chosen. It was one of the easier trails made for dog walkers rather than serious hikers, but even so there were a few rocky areas that had become loose with wear. And when Hannibal had to grab Will's hand to avoid stumbling, he didn't let it go and neither of them mentioned it.

Will was content with that, with the casual and easy intimacy growing between them. Now that he'd allowed it. And maybe this was something he could do? Even if things didn't work out with Hannibal, did he want to restrict himself so much in the future just because of things that had happened in the past? It was of course good to be cautious, but there was a point where that could become detrimental. Perhaps already had.

"This is beautiful," Hannibal said as they stood next to the railings that had been secured along the top of the outcropping for safety. "It used to be called Lover's Leap, I believe."

Will smiled at that, at Hannibal of course having some random fact to hand.

"Used to be?" Will asked, humouring him.

Hannibal nodded and tapped the railing, "These days the leaping is for the truly committed."

"Just for lovers now then," Will replied with a smile. The silence that fell between them was comfortable and sweet.

When Hannibal leaned in, slowly enough to give Will a chance to resist, he allowed their mouths to press together in a chaste kiss.

They kissed for a few long moments before Hannibal pulled back, looking at him with a serious expression.

“I hope you know that I want more than that, Will? To be more than lovers. Whilst I admit that I find you intriguing enough to settle for very little from you, my preference would be to have you as… someone significant in my life.”

Will smiled, warmed by the words. It felt like, since their walk and everything gaining somewhat of a new perspective, the reasons that he hadn’t been amenable before didn’t matter quite as much, even if they still lingered.

“I’d like that,” Will muttered gently, taking Hannibal’s hand in his and pulling it to his chest. “I like you Hannibal. I find you… interesting. And I think… I think I’m ready. I think I’ve been ready since the moment you drove away after our walk.”

Hannibal smiled and let out a shuddering breath, “Will,” He crooned before moving his free hand up to cup Will’s cheek and draw him in for another kiss. This time it was longer, more intense. A promise of something more.

It petered off into gentle pecks before they both pulled back, grinning.

“Shall we head back down and grab something to eat?” Will asked. “I hear there’s a great diner not far from here. Dog friendly too, for future reference.”

“It’s a date,” Hannibal replied teasingly.

“That’s what I was hoping you’d say.” Will teased back.

*

When Hannibal fell into his bed he let out a deep, satisfied sigh.

Will had dropped him home a short while ago, and he hadn’t missed Mischa’s smirk. They had been gone all day and she had clearly witnessed Will getting out and walking him to the door before kissing him on the doorstep. It was little more than chaste, but so clearly full of bridled passion that he wasn’t sure how they’d remain out of each other’s bed for much longer.

In fact that had been a recurring feeling throughout the day.

By the time they’d gotten to the diner it was lunchtime and so they talked and ate and laughed on that neutral and public ground. It set boundaries as equally as it frustrated. There were moments where it was clear they’d both rather be somewhere private with each other. But being able to do little more than hold hands across the table was strangely rewarding, to be forced away from the physical. And the conversations that had ensued did nothing but assure Hannibal that Will Graham was someone he wanted, on a multitude of levels.

They had still been sitting there talking and nursing their refills when dinner rolled around. With a laugh they had ordered some sandwiches to go and then had gone back to the trails and taken the easiest one, that did little more than loop away from the parking area and back again. There they were able to find a clearing under the darkening sky to sit and eat their picnic, tension bubbling between them.

So much tension that Hannibal was already hard when he hit the mattress, having been semi-hard at least for much of the day. It was thankfully more amusing than distressing. He felt like a teenager, eager and titillated by the very idea of the man. Of that kiss on the doorstep.

As he lay back, sinking into the pillows, he rubbed idly at his crotch, not planning to do much more about it than relieve some of the pressure. He wanted to savour the feeling in the hopes that next time he enjoyed a release it would be with Will.

*

Will had a spring in his step as he made his way down the highstreet. He never usually went to the coffee shop on a Sunday, but Hannibal had mentioned he'd be working it and he didn't want to wait until Monday to see him again. He liked that he didn't want to wait too. That eager feeling of something new and consuming.

Truth be told, he hadn't wanted to say goodnight last night and he'd been tempted to invite Hannibal back to his place.

But it felt right to not rush things. Will might have decided he was comfortable with coming out, but it was still as scary as the first time he had, in many ways, and rushing it could be difficult. At least with Hannibal in such a public role in the town, he could drop by and grab a coffee and spend time with him without the very act outing him.

He hoped, at least. After all, there was no denying the desire to pull the man across the counter and kiss him deeply and thoroughly.

Will's mind was consumed with that thought when he neared the shop. Close enough that he could see the glass on the sidewalk that appeared to have been swept up against the wall, out of the way of pedestrians.

"What the hell?" Will muttered as he stepped in front of the shop and looked at the broken windows. Inside the shop had been trashed, tables and chairs overturned, a few broken. And on the far wall someone had scrubbed the beautifully handwritten specials from the chalkboard and scrawled on it the words, 'You're mine. Whore.'

Will didn't hesitate in pushing the door open and walking in, feeling the crunch of something under his feet that had Hannibal and Mischa looking up from behind the counter where they were cleaning up.

"Are you okay?" Will asked them immediately, "Was anyone hurt?"

Hannibal shook his head and with a sigh started around the counter towards him. Will almost wanted to take a step back, a suspicion about all of this and his own part in it.

"What happened?" Will asked softly as Hannibal stopped in front of him. Hannibal kept a good distance and didn't reach for him despite how casually intimate they'd been the day before.

"The police have just left. It was like this when I came to open up this morning. The glazier will be here shortly, though they may only be able to help with temporary measures until tomorrow. Enough to secure the shop, as much as possible. It will be sometime before we are able to reopen."

"Hannibal," Will breathed out his name and wanted to comfort him, wanted to pull him into his arms but he knew that might not be the best move right now. "Was this your patient?"

Hannibal let out a heavy sigh and hung his head, "Yes. Hard to imagine it could be anyone else, even before I found the note he left on the counter."

“What did it say?” Will asked tentatively.

“It seems he has been watching me after all, stalking me. And he did not appreciate our day together yesterday. I am apparently a cheating whore and he will prove to me that I am his.”

“Fuck,” Will muttered. “I’m sorry, I-”

Hannibal shook his head. “Not your fault, Will. We couldn’t have known.” There was a cautious expression on Hannibal’s face that Will read immediately. He was worried this would force Will away from him, that he would change his mind about coming out. Be scared off as Tier had no doubt intended.

But nothing could be farther from the truth. This wasn’t the same as those times he’d been bullied and assaulted in his youth. This wasn’t bigotry. This was something entirely different and the last thing Hannibal needed right now was for Will to walk away.

He reached for Hannibal’s hand, taking it gently in his own whilst maintaining the distance Hannibal had set.

“I’m here, okay? I’m not going anywhere. Anything you need.”

Hannibal breathed a sigh of relief and stepped closer, resting his head against Will’s shoulder, seeking comfort.

Will circled his arms around him and held him tight as Hannibal asked, “Can we stay with you? Just for tonight so that we can make further arrangements? I hate to think what he might do…” Hannibal trailed off.

“You can both stay as long as you need.” Will gently replied.

Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

Short lived domestic bliss...

“Good morning?” It was a tentative question as much as a greeting as Will walked into his kitchen to find Mischa sneering at his coffee machine.

Without missing a beat she turned to Will with a grimace. “Hannibal isn’t going to like this. He’ll probably insist on collecting his coffee maker from home.”

Will frowned and then cocked a brow, “That chemistry set? We’re making coffee not experimenting on the beans.”

Mischa’s lips quirked into a smile that had Will smiling in return. He knew she’d been scared by what had happened at the shop, and if he could offer her and Hannibal any kind of comfort he would.

Will went over to the machine, took the mug that Mischa had put out on the side and proceeded to make her a coffee.

When he handed it to her she smiled even as she grimaced at the smell of it.

“I know, I know.” Will dismissed and apologised in one. “Your brother is starting to turn me into a coffee snob as well. Believe me, I know this isn’t the best coffee you'll ever taste.”

Mischa chuckled, but all the same it looked like she held her breath as she sipped at the inferior beverage.

“Did someone say something about the best coffee they’d ever taste?” Hannibal asked as he walked into the room.

And the sight of him stole Will’s breath away. He was wearing casual pyjama pants and a red sweater, his hair soft and free of product. He looked relaxed and beautiful. A softness that he rarely showed in public, but was showing now to Will. For a moment Will had a pang of regret that Hannibal hadn’t spent the night in his bed. Perhaps he should have pretended only to have one spare room and forced Hannibal to share with him?

“Will?” Hannibal asked with a slight grin. Will’s face reddened at being so obviously caught checking him out.

“Um. No, I was saying that it’s pretty much the worst coffee you’ve ever tasted.”

“Hmm,” Hannibal mused, stepping forward to take a tentative sniff at the cup in Mischa’s hand before he too grimaced and turned back to Will. “Perhaps later you can accompany me to our house to pick up a few items, including my coffee maker.”

At that both Mischa and Will shared a look before bursting into a fit of giggles.

“Hmf,” Hannibal narrowed his eyes at them, which made them both laugh all the more.

“Sometimes you’re a little predictable, Hanni.” Mischa said before setting aside her coffee, apparently deciding better of it. “I’m going to make a list of a few things I’ll need that I didn’t have chance to grab yesterday, if you can grab them? If that’s okay? I was going to head over to Abigail’s.”

Hannibal nodded, “Of course. Though I think I’d feel more comfortable if Abigail came here, so you weren’t out and about in the town. If that’s alright with you Will?”

“Of course,” Will replied with a smile.

“Sure.” Mischa agreed. “Well I’m gonna catch a shower then bring down a list.”

She disappeared from the room and Will stood awkwardly for a moment, not sure whether he could or should act on the impulse he had to kiss Hannibal a good morning. So he went and picked up her mug and tipped the contents down the sink.

Hannibal answered the question by stepping up behind him and sliding his hands around Will’s waist, nuzzling into the back of his neck.

“Thank you for this.”

Will chuckled, “What else could I do?”

“You could have sent us to a hotel, and perhaps we should have done that. But, I have to admit, the thought of being here with you made me feel safer.” Hannibal murmured.

“Because the house is so secluded,” Will figured.

Hannibal chuckled then, “Yes, of course. Purely that reason. Not at all because being around you makes me feel settled and warm and-”

Will turned quickly in his arms and moments later their mouths met in a hungry kiss.

*

On the one hand, Hannibal was glad that the trip back to his house went without incident. On the other, he wished the situation had been different and they could have taken advantage of the alone time.

After the morning in Will’s kitchen, the casual closeness and the passionate kiss, they’d had to calm themselves. They had things to do, and of course the sound of Mischa moving around upstairs as she went about having a shower, was very much a reminder that they didn’t have the privacy they would both like.

Will offered to take Mischa’s list and try to find the items she needed from her room, whilst Hannibal took pains to pack up the coffee machine. He didn’t have to of course, it could have been brushed off as a joke. But with Will letting them stay, Hannibal couldn’t help but want to do something for him. And he already knew that the way to Will Graham’s heart was good coffee.

Once he had stowed the boxes of equipment and coffee beans into Will's vehicle, he went back in to check there was nothing else they needed.

They had only packed overnight bags the day before, but now he knew they should pack cases and go to a hotel as they had planned. It was kind of Will to let them stay, but he didn't want to wear out that welcome, especially when so invested in not doing so.

He pulled out his case and set it on his bed as Will knocked lightly on his bedroom door and then came in.

"I think I've got everything Mischa wanted, but maybe you can double check?" Will asked, but Hannibal didn't miss the way he was eyeing the case.

"I am going to pack a few things for us, enough to move to a hotel tomorrow." Hannibal explained.

"Good plan," Will agreed with a nod. "Packing more stuff, not the hotel part."

"Will, we can't intrude-" Hannibal started but Will cut him off.

"Hannibal, if you think your going to bring that chemistry set to my house and then leave me with it to fend for myself, you've got it wrong. Besides, you've got me addicted to the good stuff now. I can't cut you off, you're practically my dealer." Will grinned.

Hannibal huffed a low chuckle, "I'm sure you can find good coffee-"

"I wasn't talking about coffee." Will smiled and then moved in to press a chaste kiss to his lips.

And there was little Hannibal could argue against that. Not that he wanted to.

*

It had been less than two hours since they'd left, and now they were back at his house. Will couldn't help but feel comforted.

Not just to the idea of them being there and safe, but just being there at all. Sharing a space together, secluded and familial.

He hoped that Hannibal would take him seriously about the hotel. It was no good arguing with someone of comfortable wealth that it was more cost effective to stay. And he had to stop short of telling Hannibal he simply just wanted them to stay, for fear of it being too much, too soon.

Of course, had this situation not arisen then stay overs much less living together, would have been a long way off. But it had happened and here they all were. And after one night, Will was loath to lose the fast domesticity that had developed.

When he parked up out front, Will decided to try and drive home the not leaving point by getting out and immediately grabbing the box that the bulk of the coffee maker was in. It absolutely was going to take up a massive portion of his counter space, but it would be worth it on several levels.

Will smiled to himself as he took the steps up his porch imagining Hannibal intently making coffee as he snaked his arms around the man's waist and nuzzled-

Will came to a stop and frowned as he got to the front door. He had noticed it was slightly ajar and his immediate thought was that Mischa had heard them pull up and unlocked it to be helpful. But now he was closer he could see that the latch had been smashed.

“Hannibal,” Will turned his head to whisper the man’s name. He set down the box and at that Hannibal froze, a frown creasing his face.

“Mischa?” Will called out. Behind him he heard Hannibal put down the box he had been carrying and then faster steps towards him.

Will took hold of Hannibal’s arm as he went to race past him and open the door.

Will shook his head, listening intently, but there was no noise inside.

“Call the police,” Will said quietly. Hannibal hesitated for a moment but then went back down to the car, grabbing his phone from inside and starting to call.

Will looked about him for a moment but there was nothing out here he could use as a weapon, or for any kind of protection. The best he might manage was the poker by the fireplace, if he could get there.

“Mischa, I’m home.” Will said loudly before carefully opening the door. There was still no noise and Will moved quietly, already used to every creaky floorboard. When he drew level with the stairs he called up, “Mischa, are you up there?”

A moment later there was a sound. Not from upstairs but from the kitchen. A low thud and then something that sounded like it could be a sob.

Will started through the house, grabbing the poker from the fireplace on his way to the kitchen.

“Girls!” Will gasped as he arrived to find both Mischa and Abigail sat on the floor, their backs to each other and bound. Thick rope around them and gags in their mouths, they both looked terrified and their faces were streaked with tears. That rope wasn’t from his shed, this was clearly a kit someone had brought with them, someone who meant business.

Will started immediately forward to help them, but both girl’s eyes darted to the corner of the room and they tried to yell and scream.

It was enough to make Will turn, which meant that the intended blow that came from behind him missed his head and instead struck his shoulder.

“Argh,” Will cried out and barely kept his feet. He used the momentum that nearly had him falling, to slam himself into his assailant. They both went crashing to the floor, Will trying to keep hold of the poker as they struggled.

For a moment he thought he had the upper hand, pinning the man, but then he heard the click of the gun cocking and stilled.

“Get back,” The man screamed in his face. “Drop it!”

Will let go of the poker and slowly moved back, onto his knees between Randal Tier and the girls, his hands raised.

He looked a little older now that he was up close, and his frame a little bulkier. Perhaps he just hadn't gotten a good look at him in the coffee shop? More likely it was being up close and being made very well aware that this was a man who had been working out. A man that had a plan, as unhinged as this might all seem.

Even without the gun Will wasn't sure he'd have been able to keep the man pinned, his body solid and hard.

"Let the girls go," Will said softly.

"You don't get to speak." Tier snarled at Will. "In fact-"

Just as Tier levelled the gun at Will, Hannibal appeared in the doorway.

"Randall," Hannibal said softly, and immediately the man's attention redirected, his arm wavering. "Let the three of them go."

"I just wanted to talk to you," Tier's tone changed, it dissolved into a beg, a whimper as he looked at Hannibal with sad eyes.

"I know," Hannibal replied, giving a comforting smile. "I'd like to talk. Perhaps we can step outside. Get some fresh air? We could take a nice walk."

Tier's expression seemed to change from one moment to the next. Anger, desire. He wanted to trust Hannibal, clearly wanted his attention, but he was wavering. Finally Tier frowned.

"I don't want anyone coming between us!" Tier spat the words and turned back to Will, gun raised again.

It was impossible not to flinch, and both girls gasped and then one sobbed. Will closed his eyes.

"He doesn't mean anything to me Randall. Surely you know me well enough to know that?" Hannibal urged gently.

When he heard the soft tread of Hannibal stepping forward, Will opened his eyes again.

Tier was looking at Hannibal once more, practically radiating desperation in his want and need for Hannibal to be only his.

"You were… trying to make me jealous?" It was a hesitant question, as though trying to confirm something that Hannibal had wanted him to figure out.

Hannibal smiled widely and nodded, holding out a hand to Tier to help him up. "Clever boy."

"You just wanted me to prove how much I love you," Tier huffed the words on a chuckle as though he had cracked some secret wide open. "That's why you rejected me before."

"I had to darling, I had to know how serious you were." Hannibal continued to step forward, and Will tried not to flinch at the words.

He knew it was all a lie. Hannibal had said before how he had tried to let Tier down gently and not humour him more than necessary. But apparently that tactic hadn't worked and a new tact was required.

Tier looked relieved as he took Hannibal's hand and allowed himself to be pulled up and into Hannibal's arms.

"I knew it, I knew it." Tier muttered over and over. Part of Will felt sorrow and pity for the young man. But more overwhelmingly he felt relief as he saw the way Hannibal gently pried the gun from the man's hand and set it on the counter.

"Let's talk outside, I'd like us to be alone," Hannibal all but whispered next to Tier's ear.

With a nod, a moment later they were gone and Will sagged with relief.

He turned quickly to the girls and pulled out both gags before he began to untie Mischa.

"Hannibal," She croaked.

"I know," Will replied, loosening her ropes enough that she could do the rest. And then he was on his feet, grabbing the gun as he went after the two men.

*

Hannibal held out his hand and allowed Randall to clasp it in his own sweaty palm as they made their way down the porch steps.

"There is a stream not far, we could walk there. It's quiet, just the two of us and-"

At the bottom of the steps Randall came to a halt and stopped Hannibal from going further.

"I know why you wanted me to be jealous, but did you have to kiss him?" Randall asked, clearly distraught. "Do you know how that made me feel?"

Hannibal fought the urge to clench his jaw. He felt such a tumult of emotions even as he tried to temper his fear. The police couldn't be far away, and he had managed to get Randall away from everyone else. He just had to keep him occupied a while longer, and if that meant risking his own life, then that's what would happen.

He chose his words carefully.

"A grave lapse in judgement on my part, for which I can only profusely apologies." Hannibal started, though Randall's face remained creased with pain.

Randall shook his head, "You wanted to kiss him."

"No," Hannibal protested. "I wanted to make you jealous and I took it a step too far. You know you mean everything to me. You said so yourself at the coffee shop. That we are-"

Hannibal stopped again as Randall pulled his hand from Hannibal's and started to pace.

"I want to believe you. I do, but you sent me away and… I know it was just to see how much I love you, but it hurt and-"

Hannibal tried not to show any reaction to the movement in the corner of his eye. A figure coming from around the other side of the house.

“Let me prove it to you,” Hannibal breathed the words as convincingly as he could, wanting Randall to think he was truly affected by him. He stepped in front of Randall and stopped him pacing, placing his hands on the man’s arms and then running them up to his neck until he felt him shudder and go a little slack.

Hannibal smiled, trying to imagine he was looking at someone he truly did love, at Will, as he leaned in slowly. Their lips brushed and he felt Randall surge forward.

Before their mouths could meet in a proper kiss there was a jolt.

Hannibal caught Randall in his arms and looked at Will.

Will’s eyes were wide and he held the gun barrel in hand. The blow he had dealt to the back of Randall’s head was hard enough to knock him unconscious but the fear in Will’s eyes made clear his concern that he had done much worse.

Hannibal crouched as he lowered Randall to the cold ground and checked his pulse. It wasn’t strong but it was there. He gingerly felt the back of the man’s head and fingers came away bloody. Not enough that there was a serious injury there, but the skin had been broken. As with all head wounds, it would bleed significantly either way.

“Is he-” Will started, hand shaking.

Hannibal shook his head. “He’s alive.”

And then Will looked around the secluded area and back down to Hannibal, his expression asking whether Randall should *remain* alive.

Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

Hannibal, Will and their Happy Ending.

The police had arrived mere moments after Will had considered killing Randall Tier, taking the decision from him. A decision he had already made in his mind, if it meant keeping Hannibal and his family safe.

From there the police took over and ambulances were called, one for Tier with a police escort, one to check them all over.

They were interviewed separately there and then, and when Will finally returned back to the kitchen what felt like hours later, he found Mischa and Abigail both in Hannibal's arms.

Hannibal soothed them and ran his hands down their backs.

Neither were crying but they were both clearly distraught.

"They're all packing up now," Will said. "The officer said he would call you tomorrow with an update, but that after the previous issues and the break in at the coffee shop, Tier was looking at doing time."

All three turned to look at him and at that Abigail burst into tears.

"I'm so sorry," She sobbed. "I didn't mean to bring him here. It's my fault."

Hannibal pulled both girls close to him again and shushed Abigail.

"It's no such thing. He was always going to find me if he so wished, which he clearly did." Hannibal spoke soothingly.

Abigail nodded and quietened a little and finally Mischa pulled them both away from Hannibal's embrace.

"I'm going to drive Abigail home and stay with her the night, alright?" Mischa asked, though she probably knew it was a request that couldn't be denied even if Hannibal thought he had that power over her.

"Of course," Hannibal replied with a soft smile, and they both watched as the girl's left.

*

A while later, Hannibal gazed out over the property, imagining what it might look like with a dog or two. And even what he would look like here, settled. Walking hand in hand with Will, or sitting in comfortable silence with him on the porch.

The door behind him closed with a dull thud and then Will was at his side, offering him a glass of whiskey.

“Thank you,” Hannibal turned to Will as he took the drink with a smile. “Once I’ve had this, I should be on my way.” Hannibal offered.

“What?” Will cocked his head and frowned, “You don’t have to go.”

“I fear that we have intruded enough on your good will, given everything that has happened. And of course, it is now safe for me to return to my own home, so naturally-”

“Naturally you thought that I would pass up the opportunity to spend time alone with you?” Will asked. They studied each other for a long moment before Will continued, “Don't make me beg.”

His tone was indiscernible but Hannibal decided to take it in good humour. “Will you not even say, pretty please?”

Will smirked at that and the tension broke, he lifted a brow as he drawled, “Please.”

Hannibal chuckled and nodded, “That will most certainly persuade me.”

They were both smiling as Will stepped to him, closing the distance between them before pressing his mouth to Hannibal’s.

*

They kissed urgently and passionately. They both had the same realisation that, with Mischa at Abigail’s and Tier no longer a threat, they had all the time in the world. And yet, the main part of the realisation was that they were finally alone together.

The journey to Will’s bedroom was a blur and he wasn’t even sure how long it had taken. All he knew was that he now had Hannibal beneath him on his bed, as they kissed and rocked against each other, gasping and panting.

They were both hard inside their clothes and Will was sure he could come just like that and be happy. But just remembering some of the things he’d thought about when jerking off pulled a groan from him.

He moved his mouth to the side of Hannibal’s neck and nuzzled there before breathing out the words, “I can’t count the amount of times I’ve thought about fucking you.”

Hannibal released a chuckle from deep in his chest and the sound warmed Will all the way through.

“I can’t deny that I have thought the same.”

“Glad I finally stopped fighting this,” Will muttered and then pulled back. He sat back on his haunches, Hannibal’s legs split around him, looking down with a hungry expression.

“I don’t want to rush this,” Will said, quickly. “We have time, we can-”

“Will, I want to be clear. I have wanted you inside of me since practically the first moment we met, and I don’t wish to be denied any longer than I must. If it is what you want, then please-”

Before Hannibal could finish Will was on him, kissing him again as his fingers went down to his vest and began trying to unbutton it. He gave up quickly there and instead went down to Hannibal's trousers and started unbuckling them.

They were both filled with an eager passion and Will felt like a damn teenager. Like the teenager he'd never had the freedom to be.

Hannibal's hands were on him too, pulling his shirt out of his pants until he was able to pull it over Will's head. And as soon as it was out of the way, they were kissing again, as he continued to tug at Hannibal's clothes, finally getting his pants down to his thighs. Will reached inside Hannibal's underwear and groaned as he closed his fist around the man's hard cock. It was warm and perfect, and Will couldn't help but start jerking him off before even pulling him free of the underwear.

In the end, with a sharp hiss, Hannibal pushed Will back.

"Don't, I'll come."

"I think that's the point, Doctor." Will replied, his cheeks pinking up as he realised he'd let slip the title that he had previously fantasized about.

Hannibal chuckled, but then reached for Will's pants and continued in his efforts to get Will naked.

"Fuck," Will muttered as Hannibal palmed his cock through his trousers. "Yeah…" He groaned, pushing forward into his hand.

"Want you to fuck me," Hannibal grunted, and the cursing was odd from his polite mouth, but Will was too far gone to respond with anything other than a nod.

Then Will was unbuttoning his own slacks and pushing them down, his cock springing free as Hannibal fell back on the bed panting.

"You look quite feral, Will." Hannibal breathed, his eyes flashing with excitement.

Will huffed a laugh and then reached over to grab lube and condoms from the bedside drawer. As he did so, Hannibal moved with him, rolling onto his front and pushing up his ass.

"Fuck," Will said again, this time more of a whimper and a prayer that he wouldn't come whilst trying to roll the condom on.

With some eager fumbling, Will rolled on the condom and coated it with lube, before squeezing out more onto two fingers and then pressing them to Hannibal's hole.

Hannibal responded with something between a moan and a sigh.

As Will circled his fingers over Hannibal's rim, he muttered, "Tell me what you want."

"Two…" Hannibal groaned as Will immediately pushed both fingers into him, finding him relaxed enough to take them. "Just… for a minute… then…"

Will understood, using his fingers to lube the way and feeling Hannibal's ass relax around him all the more. He could probably get in three or four pretty quick with no trouble, but he had no intentions of finger fucking Hannibal right now. His cock was already straining against his belly.

“Will…” Hannibal gasped and reached back for him.

He looked a beautiful mess. His hair floppy, still buttoned up in his shirt and vest though his trousers and underwear were down to his thighs.

Will pulled his fingers out and then jerked Hannibal’s clothes lower, Hannibal lifting so he could pull them down past his knees and to his ankles. That was good enough for Will to knee Hannibal’s legs further apart as he positioned himself behind him, his own trousers down to his knees. Hannibal was on his knees now, his head buried in the pillow of his arms, his back arched.

Will stroked the lube up and down his cock again before teasing the tip of it against Hannibal’s hole. When he groaned, Will pushed forward, slowly but steadily feeding his cock into Hannibal’s ass.

It was tight and hot, but not uncomfortably so. Hannibal’s body gave way to every inch of him as they both groaned and he quickly bottomed out. When he did, he dropped over Hannibal, draping himself over his back as he caught his breath.

“You feel so good,” Will managed to choke out, closing his eyes to stop himself coming. “I won’t last.”

Hannibal’s only reply was a whimper, which Will had to interpret as meaning much the same was true for Hannibal.

Will pulled back enough to get some leverage and then drew almost all the way back out before steadily pushing back in. He did that a few times, the slide becoming easier on each push, and Hannibal increasingly trembling beneath him as he tried to retain his position.

Now an easy glide, Will shuffled slightly and took hold of Hannibal’s hips, adjusting his position enough to start pumping into him. Hannibal cried out on the first stroke, his whole body shuddering in a way that Will understood.

With a lopsided smile, Will repeated his motion with the same result. He groaned.

“Fuck,” Will muttered before he pushed in again. This time slowly, but when he pulled back out he then began to thrust harder, deeper. Within a minute he was fucking Hannibal with abandon and almost every thrust was grazing his prostate, leaving Hannibal a shaking mess beneath him.

The room was filled with the obscene sound of the slap of flesh on flesh, only broken here and there by groans, gasps, and muttered words.

Tiring in one position, Will went back to leaning over Hannibal’s back, trying to keep his angle as unchanged as he could as he wrapped his arms around Hannibal’s middle and fucked into him.

When he slid one hand down to Hannibal’s cock Hannibal cried out before Will could even touch him.

“No, wait…” Hannibal near sobbed and Will stilled his hand but continued to thrust into him. “Oh fuck…”

A moment later Hannibal shuddered and cried out, shooting his load all over the bed, some catching Will’s hands and arms.

The feel of Hannibal tightening around him was the end of the story. Will wasn't even sure how he'd managed to hold off from coming so long as it was, but as soon as those muscles started constricting around him, milking him, he was done.

With a grunt and stuttering hips, Will's balls drew up and he spilled himself into the condom, his hips continued for a few more thrusts until he was aching and had to pull out.

They both groaned as Will did so, and then he fell onto his back on the bed, unsurprised when Hannibal simply collapsed next to him.

They caught their breath in silence for long minutes before Will looked at them with an assessing eye, letting out a low chuckle.

"We're a fucking mess."

Both of them still had on their shoes and socks, though Will seemed to have somehow lost one shoe and was topless, his bottom half pulled down to his knees. Hannibal still wore his vest and shirt, as he lay there face down in his own come, with his trousers around his ankles.

Will kicked off his remaining shoe, amused at how Hannibal did the same whilst barely moving a muscle, and then he drew a sheet up over them as much to stop them getting cold as to give them some belated dignity.

"I had pictured something more graceful, more sensual, for our first time." Will chuckled, though he had to admit it wasn't wholly a joke.

Hannibal hummed into the pillow, clearly shattered. His reply muffled as he said, "We are not teenagers. We're adults given to adult responses, needs and desires. I regret I didn't have the patience for something more sensual."

Will laughed for a moment but then sobered.

"True. But even so… I'd like to make love to you later."

Hannibal turned his face in the pillow enough for Will to see the warm smile there. "If it's not too forward, I think I'd like you to make love to me for the rest of my life."

"I'll consider it," Will grinned, even as his heart skipped a beat. This was new, not just with Hannibal, but being out in Wolf Trap and dealing with all the issues, real or not, that it might throw up for him. He didn't plan to count his chickens, but equally, it was increasingly hard to imagine his life without Hannibal and Mischa in it.

He would take it day by day, but right now he could never see a day where he didn't fall further in love with Hannibal Lecter.

He lay back, looking up at the ceiling as he considered his next words.

"Hannibal?" Will started, getting only a rumbled hum in response as Hannibal seemed on the verge of dozing now.

Will turned his head and looked at his lover, who opened his eyes and looked back at him. After a moment Will looked back to the ceiling, not wanting to see Hannibal's reaction as he said-

“I wanted to kill him. If the police hadn’t arrived when they did. I’d have killed him. Not out of anger or fear. It would have been a calculated decision to remove him from your life. From Mischa’s life. So you never need worry about him again.”

“Will,” Hannibal let out his name on a gasp of breath, shifting up onto his elbows.

“Fuck, I shouldn’t have… It’s so fucked up-”

Before Will could continue, Hannibal moved, setting his weight over Will as he looked down into his eyes.

“I’d have let you. I’d have helped you. I wanted to-”

Will surged up, capturing Hannibal’s mouth with his own.

They kissed for a long moment, hungry but slow. Deep but gentle.

When they finally broke apart it was as though a pact had been made. An agreement on how to handle Tier if he ever came into their lives again, though they might never speak it aloud.

They settled into each other’s arms and lay there for a while longer before Will’s stomach rumbled and they both laughed.

“Perhaps it’s time for dinner,” Hannibal said, starting to move. “And if I can set up my maker, we can follow it with coffee.”

Will grabbed hold of Hannibal and pulled him back down, “I can wait a little longer.”

“Can’t I even tempted you with a ristretto? I believe it is your favourite,” Hannibal teased.

Will grinned and shook his head, “I think I have a new favourite now,” he muttered against Hannibal’s mouth and drew him into a long, sensual kiss.

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